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**A SOLDIER IN  
CHRIST'S ARMY**



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# A SOLDIER IN CHRIST'S ARMY

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# A SOLDIER IN CHRIST'S ARMY

AN EXPLANATION OF CONFIRMATION  
AND THE CATECHISM FOR  
PUBLIC SCHOOL BOYS

BY

A. C. CHAMPNEYS, M.A.  
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"We receive this Child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign him with the sign of the Cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end."—*Service for Baptism of Infants*.

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## PREFACE

THE justification for this book being written must be that its contents are the result of a considerable amount of time devoted during fourteen years to preparing boys for Confirmation. Besides other preparation which those in my House had, I went through with them myself to the best of my ability the outlines of what 'a Christian ought to know and believe,' in connection with the Catechism, first paraphrasing to them the more difficult parts of this. I used to write down hardly anything (wishing to talk rather than lecture to them), so that, though I of course remembered the substance of what I had said the year before, there was nothing to hamper me in improving it, and this I tried to do each year by reading books which seemed to be promising, by carefully thinking over the subjects to be explained with the help of the Bible and Prayer-book, and by using such experience as I was gaining of the way in which boys look at things,

what points are most difficult for them to understand, and where they are most likely to go wrong in practice. By asking them questions separately (for my own satisfaction) and by other means I learnt to some extent how they had understood or failed to understand what I had put to them in this or that way. And very soon after I had been teaching boys with a view to Confirmation for the last time, in 1899, I tried to put down on paper the general result. This therefore may claim to represent some considerable amount of thought and experience.

Among the books to which (as I have said) this book is indebted, I must mention specially Bishop Cotton's 'Principles and Practice of Christianity,' Dean Vaughan's 'Notes for Lectures on Confirmation,' and Canon Gore's 'The Sermon on the Mount.'

The Appendix on Difficulties in Belief is to some small extent founded on what I have taught in Form, but not on what I have taught boys for Confirmation, and is, I think, more likely to be useful at a later stage than this.

Besides other notes, references are given to passages in the Bible which are quoted in the text or are the foundation of what is said there. I know that few people, boys or others, ever look out references, but in case anyone is willing to

do so, it will be better that this should be done, as a rule, before or after reading the text of the chapter to which they belong ; thus used, they would be a help, but to be constantly referring while reading a book does not make it easier to follow the thread of it intelligently. Whenever I thought parts of the Bible absolutely necessary to be read, they are printed in full in the text.

In these quotations I have by preference given the 'Authorised Version.' But where it seemed to me that I was bound to use a better reading, or that a different translation would make the real meaning plainer, I have not hesitated to vary this.

If the book is of use to boys, I shall be extremely glad.

A. C. CHAMPNEYS.

*August, 1900.*

#### NOTE TO SECOND EDITION

IN the present edition a few changes have been made which seemed necessary for greater accuracy or clearness, or otherwise desirable, and a small addition has been made to Appendix II.

A. C. CHAMPNEYS.

*January, 1904.*



# CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	WHAT CONFIRMATION MEANS . . . . .	I
THE PROMISES MADE FOR US WHEN WE WERE CHRISTENED.		
II.	FIRST, WHAT WE GIVE UP . . . . .	21
III.	SECONDLY, WHAT WE BELIEVE . . . . .	45
IV.	THIRDLY, WHAT WE ARE TO DO . . . . .	79
V.	WHAT A CHRISTIAN LIFE IS LIKE . . . . .	112
HELP TO DO RIGHT.		
VI.	PRAYER . . . . .	133
VII.	THE SACRAMENTS . . . . .	163
	(1.) The Sacraments in General . . . . .	171
	(2.) Baptism . . . . .	175
	(3.) The Lord's Supper . . . . .	180
APPENDIX.		
I.	THE APOSTLES' CREED, WITH SOME OF THE AUTHORITIES FOR ITS STATEMENTS FROM THE BIBLE . . . . .	201
II.	DIFFICULTIES IN BELIEF . . . . .	204
	General Advice . . . . .	204
	Miracles . . . . .	206
	The Evidence for Christianity . . . . .	210



# A SOLDIER IN CHRIST'S ARMY

## I

### WHAT CONFIRMATION MEANS

WHAT is 'Confirmation'? The word to 'confirm' of course means to 'strengthen,' but it is also used of ratifying an agreement, assenting to it, accepting it as binding. It was in this way that kings of England 'confirmed' Magna Charta.

Now in everything that we have to do with God there is a part which we must do for ourselves, and a part which we want God to do for us. The word 'Confirmation' implies both these. If we look at the service for Confirmation in the Prayer Book, we shall see that (immediately after the opening address or preface) the candidates are asked: "Do ye here, in the presence of God and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that was made in your name at your Baptism; ratifying and *con-*

*firming* the same in your own persons, and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe, and to do, all those things which your Godfathers and Godmothers then undertook for you?" This then is one part of Confirmation; we "ratify and confirm" what was promised for us by our God-parents, just as a king or anyone else might 'confirm' a charter or agreement, which his guardians had made on his behalf when he was not yet of age. This is what we have to do for ourselves in Confirmation.

The other meaning of the word 'confirm' points to what God is going to do for us. Here it means simply 'strengthen'; just as the Bishop prays for those who are to be confirmed, "*Strengthen* them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter." So that this is what we want God to do for us, to give us strength by the Holy Ghost to do right and to be real Christians, as our Godfathers promised that we would, which promise we are going to 'confirm,' or ratify, or accept, for ourselves.

And now, having learnt in outline what Confirmation is, let us see what is said of it in the Bible. The Apostles themselves were never confirmed, or rather hands were never laid on them;—they were confirmed by the Holy Ghost descending on them on the day of Pente-

cost.<sup>1</sup> Cornelius and his friends were confirmed in the same way directly by God himself.<sup>2</sup> But these cases were exceptional, and as all need the help of the Holy Ghost in order both to see what is right<sup>3</sup> and also to do it,<sup>4</sup> the Apostles, who were guided by the Holy Ghost in everything of importance that they did,<sup>5</sup> had it put into their minds that they should impart or pass on this gift to others by laying their hands on them with prayer. The earliest instance of this that we have a distinct account of was within a very few years of our Lord's Ascension, just after St. Stephen was martyred. Most of the Christians at Jerusalem had been scattered by the persecution, and one of them, named Philip, went and preached to the Samaritans and converted a great many of them. "Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they

<sup>1</sup> Acts, ii. 1-4.

<sup>2</sup> Acts, x. 44-47.

<sup>3</sup> St. John, xiv. 26; Collect for Whitsunday.

<sup>4</sup> Acts, iv. 29-31; Collect for First Sunday after the Epiphany.

<sup>5</sup> Acts, v. 3; xv. 28.

their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”<sup>1</sup> There is another instance in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, where St. Paul confirmed some Christians at Ephesus. And in the Epistle to the Hebrews<sup>2</sup> the author of it says that he is not going to say anything of the *elements* of Christianity, giving as instances baptism and “laying on of hands.”

Confirmation then (though it is not called by that name) was in the time of the Apostles universally recognized among Christians. And we do not hear of its being administered by anyone but Apostles (Philip, for instance, did not confirm), and therefore it is now in the English Church administered only by Bishops, who hold the corresponding place in our Church. And it has of course been handed down from the times of the Apostles.<sup>3</sup> It was not brought in afresh at some later time from a study of what is said of it in the Bible.

Of course it would not be true to suppose

<sup>1</sup> Acts, viii. 14-17.

<sup>2</sup> vi. 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Though the form of confirming has varied, and it has in the English Church been put off till those who have been baptized as babies have reached a time of life when they can understand what it means, thus making it still more like the “laying on of hands” in the time of the Apostles.

that the help of the Holy Spirit is not given at other times.<sup>1</sup> Where God undertakes to do something for us in some special way (as, for instance, by the Sacraments) He does not say that He will help us in this way *and no other*, but that He will help us specially in this way—which is quite sufficient for us to know.

There is however a difficulty which is sometimes brought forward about this view of Confirmation. It is said: “Oh, but the laying on of hands by the Apostles was something quite different. *Then* the people who had hands laid on them received extraordinary and miraculous powers;—they spoke with languages which they did not know before, or perhaps which did not exist elsewhere in the world at all; some had power given them to preach, or to heal sick people<sup>2</sup>—and there are no such outward supernatural signs in Confirmation now at all. Therefore it is not the same thing now as it was then.” Let us see whether this objection will stand.

Of course we know that ‘miraculous’ gifts and powers are not given in this way now. Such proofs that God was really at the back of Christianity were necessary then to convince people; they are not necessary now. Now any-

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke, xi. 13; St. John, xiv. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Acts, xix. 6; 1 Corinthians, xii. 28, and xiv.

one who thinks about it can understand how divine our religion is—one which could not have come from any man, certainly not from the Apostles (according to the account that they give of themselves), unless God Himself had given them an example and teaching and guidance—anyone can see now how it has affected the thoughts of the world, and raised it in so many ways, besides making those who really believe it quite different people. But it was not so easy to feel sure about a half-known and untried religion then, and consequently 'signs' were necessary, that is to say, things were done which were not in accordance with the way in which God manages the world at ordinary times—though nothing is really more wonderful or miraculous than the effect of Christ's religion on people who really try to follow it with the help of His Spirit.

But even at first these 'gifts' were not the most important result of Confirmation. St. Paul evidently considered that the Christians at Corinth thought too much of them. At the end of the twelfth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians, after saying how the different gifts in different people work together for the advantage and improvement of the whole body of Christians, or 'Church,' just as the different powers of the

hand and the foot do in a man's body, and that each man cannot expect to have *all* these powers, he says: "But covet earnestly the greater gifts. And a yet more excellent way shew I unto you. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."<sup>1</sup> That is to say, "It is quite right to wish for the best of these extraordinary gifts, but there is something better still; for, if one has not unselfish love for others, one may have the gift of tongues in the highest perfection that can be imagined, and speak the language of heaven itself, and yet it is all mere noise; and though one can preach, and can understand the most difficult things in religion, and though one has the strongest faith, it is of no use without this love; and though one gives away all one's property from some lower motive, such as wanting

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians, xii. 31; xiii. 1-3.

the good opinion of others, and though one submits to be burned for one's religion from pride or obstinacy, it is all no good without love." And if we want to know what this love is, we find (just afterwards)<sup>1</sup> that "it suffereth long and is kind, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up," and so on. It makes those who have it kind, and considerate, and humble, and courteous, and forbearing, and ready to believe the best of others. Mere ordinary Christian behaviour, one might say, which St. Paul puts above all these supernatural gifts. And if we look at his account of the fruits (or results) produced by the Spirit, as described in his letter to the Galatians,<sup>2</sup> we see that these are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (or self-control). Speaking with tongues and the rest are not even mentioned. They never were the most important gifts of the Holy Spirit. And all the rest is just the same now as it was then. No one can be a Christian at all at any time unless he tries to live like one, and he cannot live like one and be kind and charitable and master of himself, without the help of the Holy Spirit, which will be given him, specially in Confirmation if he takes it in the right way.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians, xiii. 4, etc.

<sup>2</sup> v. 22, 23.

If we do our share there is no doubt that God will do His; and thus our own part of the matter is most important. For the object of the gift of the Holy Spirit is to enable one to lead a Christian life, and if one does not try one's best to do this, God will certainly not help us to what we apparently do not want. It depends upon a boy himself whether his Confirmation does him good or not.

It must do him either good or harm. If any one thinks, "Oh, everybody is confirmed at a certain age," or if he is going to be confirmed only because his parents wish it, without any special resolve to alter his life, this is much worse than useless. No one can make a solemn promise before God and men, affecting his whole future life, as a mere matter of course, or as a form, without its being a mere dishonest sham, and God does not like shams. Besides this, a gentleman is obviously bound to keep his word, and should not give a promise if he does not really mean to keep it. If therefore anyone does not mean to take his Confirmation seriously, and to promise with the full intention of keeping his word, it is far better that he should wait till he has different intentions. This will be honest at all events. And yet it is a pity that he should not be confirmed. What he promises is

good for him, or God would not ask it of him, and the life of a Christian is the highest and finest that anyone can live.

As to what the promise amounts to, no doubt all of you have some idea already, and more will be said of this later on. But at any rate you know that it is taking upon yourselves or agreeing to what was promised for you when you were christened, and this is summed up towards the end of the service for Baptism, where the child's forehead is marked with the Cross, Christ's badge or uniform. Each of us was marked with this sign "in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil."

One principal reason why the Son of God, our Saviour Jesus Christ, came into the world was to found a society to carry on His work, by helping on all that is right, and fighting against what is low and base and mean and nasty,<sup>1</sup> first in ourselves and then among those with whom we come in contact. The question is whether we will serve in His army or not. It is plainly mean to enlist and not to fight;—what should we think of an officer or soldier

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians, vi. 11, etc.

who shirked in this way? But it is also very poor and ungrateful, considering what He has done for us, and what it cost Him, to refuse to pledge ourselves to make an effort to do what He wishes so much.

If then anyone does want to take his Confirmation seriously and in the right way, there are three main things to be borne in mind.

(1) He ought to learn all he can with his mind, by reading carefully and listening to what is taught him, and thinking over it afterwards, so as to get it fixed. There is much that can be learnt from others both as to what our belief as Christians amounts to, and what we ought to do in consequence, and also how we can manage to do it, for, like everything that is really worth doing, it takes trouble and attention.

(2) And he must make up his mind that he will keep his promise like a gentleman, and pray God to help him to do this.

(3) The third thing is not less important, and that is to *practise* living like a Christian, which shows that one is in earnest, and in fact *is* being in earnest.

Everyone has got faults which, if he is honest with himself, and will judge of himself as he would of some one whom he did not particularly

like, he will find out better than anyone else could tell him. The thing is to set about correcting these, with God's help. One boy does not control his thoughts ; he thinks about things that he should not, and perhaps talks about them. Another is lazy or 'slack'—he does not do his best with work or in games, and everything that is worth doing is worth doing as well as one can.<sup>1</sup> Another spends too much on eating, and gives too much attention to it, which is low. Another cheats at his work, and takes marks which do not belong to him. Another has a habit of saying smart slanderous things of other people, running them down, and imputing bad motives to boys or masters. Another makes those whom he dislikes or despises unhappy in other ways. All these habits are plainly quite unfit for a genuine Christian—for one who is trying, however remotely, to act like Christ. Now each of us can know what his faults are, and must set to work to correct them, if he is in earnest. It is no good to say, "I will alter that when I am confirmed." It is not so easy to change all at once, and if you mean to keep your word then you must practise now. Otherwise it would be as if a boy who wanted to be good at a game, cricket,

<sup>1</sup> Romans, xii. 11 ; Colossians, iii. 23.

for instance, were to say, "I shall not go up to a net and practise; I shall do my best when a match comes on." No one would believe that he was in earnest in wishing to do well at cricket; and to live like a Christian, that is, as Christ wishes, is of somewhat greater importance.

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Almighty God, who through thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ hast overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; We humbly beseech thee, that, as by thy special grace preventing<sup>1</sup> us thou dost put into our minds good desires, so by thy continual help we may bring the same to good effect; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Preventing* = going before, showing us the way.

<sup>2</sup> Collect for Easter Sunday.



THE PROMISES MADE FOR US WHEN  
WE WERE CHRISTENED



## II

### THE PROMISES MADE FOR US WHEN WE WERE CHRISTENED

#### *Question.*

What is your name? What is your Christian name?

#### *Answer.*

N. or M. John, or Richard, or William, or whatever it is.

#### *Question.*

Who gave you this name? Who said what your name was to be when it was given you?

#### *Answer.*

My Godfathers and Godmothers in my My Godfathers and Godmother at my Baptism<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Service for Baptism of Infants, "Then the Priest shall take the Child into his hands," etc.

Baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

when I was made (1) a part of Christ's Body (which is "the blessed company of all faithful people")<sup>1</sup>; (2) God's child; and (3) an heir of Christ's kingdom, which I am to share with Him.

*Question.*

What did your Godfathers and Godmother then for you?

What did your Godparents do for you when you were christened?

*Answer.*

They did promise and vow three things in my name. First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works,

They promised and undertook three things on my behalf:

(1) That I would refuse to be led by the devil into all the wicked things which he makes men think and say and do; that I would

<sup>1</sup> See Communion Service, alternative prayer after the Communion.

the pomps and vanity<sup>1</sup> of this wicked world,

and all the sinful lusts of the flesh.

Secondly, that I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith.

And thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

not care for the outward show and appearances which many people think so much of, and the notions that have no reason in them, and of which many are low or wicked, of the average people around me ; and that I would give up all such desires or pleasures connected with the body as are sinful.

(2) That I should believe all the facts of the Christian Faith, as contained in the different parts or sentences ('articles') of the Creed.

(3) That I should guide myself by God's commandments (particularly the Ten Commandments, and our Lord's commandments in the Sermon on the Mount), and in general by

<sup>1</sup> Means 'emptiness,' not 'conceit.' A bladder is an instance of vanity. It looks solid, but when you prick it there is nothing inside but air, and it collapses.

what I know He wishes, and try to live according to these all my life.

*Question.*

Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and to do, as they have promised for thee?

Do you not think that you are bound to believe (*see 2*), and to act (*see 1, 3*), as your Godparents promised that you would?

*Answer.*

Yes verily; and by God's help so I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly Father that he hath called me to this state of salvation through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his grace that I may continue in the same unto my life's end.

Yes, certainly, and by God's help I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly Father for having, through His Son, my Saviour, brought me into this position (baptized, believing, and wanting to do right) in which I shall be saved if I keep on like that. And I pray God to give me His kind help that I may keep on so all my life.

*I. What we give up.*

THE Catechism begins by carrying us back to our Baptism ; our ‘Christian’ name reminds us of it. This name was given us when we were ‘christened,’ that is to say ‘made Christians,’ brought into Christ’s flock, and enlisted in Christ’s army. Each of us was then made (1) a part of ‘Christ’s Body,’ that ‘Church,’ or society for carrying on His work, of which He is the Head which all the ‘members’ or limbs obey, and which guides and directs them all. This is a comparison of which St. Paul is very fond. In a chapter which we referred to before<sup>1</sup> he says, “by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,”<sup>2</sup> and, “Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular,”<sup>3</sup> that is, as parts of a whole, with different powers and capacities. And again he speaks of the “building up of the body of Christ,”<sup>4</sup> and of Christ as the Head of this body on which the parts of the body must depend,<sup>5</sup> just as when our Lord Himself says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: . . . without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians, xii.

<sup>2</sup> xii. 13.

<sup>3</sup> xii. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Ephesians, iv. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Ephesians, iv. 15, 16.

<sup>6</sup> St. John, xv. 5, 6

(2) We were also made 'God's children.' Now a child of any father is sure to be more or less like him. But we are naturally extremely unlike God. We have all of us all kinds of tendencies and inclinations to do wrong,<sup>1</sup> to which we unfortunately give way to a very large extent, which we need not do. But God gives us at our Baptism and in other ways the power to resist these inclinations and to do right, and so to become more like Him. His Son says, "Love your enemies . . . that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."<sup>2</sup> Only, with that generosity which God always shows us, he does not wait until we have become good to make us His children, but takes this for granted, so to speak, and adopts us as His children that we may become like Him.<sup>3</sup> When we are brought into the society of which His Son is the Head, we become the brothers of Jesus Christ, and sons of God.<sup>4</sup> Jesus in the message that He sent by Mary Magdalene to His disciples after His Resurrection said, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father."<sup>5</sup> And the writer

<sup>1</sup> This is what is meant by 'Original Sin.'

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, v. 44, 45.      <sup>3</sup> Romans, viii. 14-17.

<sup>4</sup> 1 John, iii. 1, 2.

<sup>5</sup> St. John, xx. 17.

of the Epistle to the Hebrews says, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren."<sup>1</sup>

(3) "And if children, then heirs," says St. Paul, "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."<sup>2</sup> And our Lord says the same thing: "In my Father's house are many mansions; . . . I go to prepare a place for you."<sup>3</sup> But this kingdom of which we are inheritors, which belongs to us, and to which we belong, is not exclusively in heaven, though this is its mother-country. It has in the world a colony which is just as much a part of it as heaven is, just as India or Natal is a real part of the British Empire, and has the same sovereign over it as the mother-country. If anyone wants to belong to this kingdom of God and Christ he must join it in this life by baptism, and, what is more, he must be a loyal and active subject of it if he is to count as belonging to it at all. Now all the citizens of this kingdom are in the army, just as in the states of Greece and at Rome every citizen was expected to turn out and fight whenever he was wanted. Only in that part of Christ's kingdom which is in this world the army is always on active service; it is

<sup>1</sup> ii. 9-12.

<sup>2</sup> Romans viii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> St. John, xiv. 2.

the 'Church Militant,' the 'fighting Church.' The desire which some people have to go to heaven (the capital of the kingdom, where Christ is),<sup>1</sup> before they have done their share of this, is unreasonable and rather absurd,—it is like a boy wanting holidays before he has done his fair share of work, or like a soldier wanting medals and decorations for staying quietly at home. It is not particularly healthy to think too much of going to heaven; what we ought to be thinking of is how to do as much fighting as possible against evil in ourselves and outside us, and if we are "not ashamed manfully to fight under Christ's banner" the reward will come of itself, for the kingdom is all one:

"One family we dwell in Him,  
One Church above, beneath,  
Though now divided by the stream,  
The narrow stream, of death ;

"One army of the living God  
To His commands we bow,—'

and a Christian certainly does not cease to belong to Christ's kingdom by dying, any more than a soldier ceases to be a subject of the Queen by coming home to England from the Soudan, or the Indian frontier, or South Africa

<sup>1</sup> Including what is called 'Paradise.'

Now we were brought into this army at our Baptism, when we received its badge, the Cross. There is nothing strange in this being done before we could be consulted. In Germany, for instance, the children of the Emperor are still put into the Army before they really know what it means, and the same sort of thing was often done in the British Navy, where boys were entered on its books while they were still hardly out of the nursery.<sup>1</sup> So too boys sometimes have their names put down for a club before they are able to judge whether they would wish it or not. In the same way our parents enlisted us in Christ's army when we were babies, because they were sure that it was good for us, and that we could not be put under God's care too soon. But as the object of that army is to fight against evil, and to help on all that is good, in dependence on God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, it was necessary that some one should promise on our behalf that we would try to carry on this fight for which the army was formed, and to help on the object for which Christ founded His society, the Church.

But can people be bound by what others promise for them? Strictly speaking, of course they

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, "Autobiography of a Seaman," by Thomas, tenth Earl of Dundonald, pp. 8, 9.

cannot. The Emperor's son might cut himself off from the army, the boy might decline to join his ship, or to take up his membership of the club. Only he cannot have the advantages without the duties—he cannot 'have it both ways.' No one can be in an army who refuses to fight, or in a society who does not try to carry out its objects. And anyone who disowns the promises made for him at Baptism, the conditions on which he was made God's child, definitely cuts himself off from God, and cannot expect Him to answer his prayers or take care of him. As a matter of fact we have all of us accepted our obligations any number of times by praying to God, and looking to Him as 'Our Father' to help us. So that we are certainly bound by the engagement which we have thus recognized. But, after all, the question whether you were bound before is of little practical importance now to you who are going solemnly to say that you intend to be bound by the promises made for you, and that you wish to be so bound. "Do you not think that you are bound to believe and to do as they have promised for you?" "Yes, certainly, and by God's help so I will"—this is the right state of mind for anyone who is going to be confirmed.

Since the engagement was (and is) to serve in

Christ's army, it is only reasonable first of all to give up all friendship and alliance with His enemies. It seems hardly necessary to say this ; we do not even imagine that a British soldier would do what would suit and please President Kruger, or the Khalifa or one of his Emirs, or try to carry out the wishes of a chief of one of the hill-tribes in India against whom his country was fighting rather than those of his own Commander-in-Chief. We know what would be thought of such a soldier—and what would be done with him at the earliest opportunity. And yet some boys who would say they were Christians, even those who have taken the military oath afresh of their own accord at Confirmation, do follow a low public opinion of the average people round them, as when they are told that 'there is no great harm in it,' or that 'lots of people do it,' or that 'mere talking does not matter.' They do some of them spend a great deal too much on eating, and they read books or papers which are not clean and wholesome. They slander and spite those whom they do not like, and they lead other people to do wrong, in order to keep them company, or sometimes for the mere pleasure of the thing. In other words, they 'follow and are led by'<sup>1</sup> the

<sup>1</sup> Service for Baptism.

world, the flesh, and the devil, clean against the commands and wishes of their Captain, Jesus Christ.

It is then necessary to renounce once for all these three great enemies of the Kingdom, to make up our minds that we 'will not follow nor be led by them.' But we ought to have some clear idea what we are promising to renounce, if, like gentlemen, we intend to keep our word.

'The world' certainly is one of the great enemies of Christ's Kingdom. St. John says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."<sup>1</sup> And yet the idea of it is at first sight rather hard to grasp. Perhaps we can see more clearly what it means if we think of a man whom we should call completely worldly. Such a man lives as if there were nothing real beyond this world. His only objects are wealth and comfort in this life, and to make a show, to be thought much of, and talked about,<sup>2</sup> probably he wishes to be thought richer than he is.<sup>3</sup> He goes to church in places where he is known, because it is respectable; perhaps gives away money, if he will get enough credit for it. He will commit those sins which

<sup>1</sup> 1 John, ii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 'Pomps.'

<sup>3</sup> This is a good instance of 'vanity.' What is the good of it?

are not harshly condemned by public opinion, if they are convenient. In general he not only desires comfort and praise in this life as the things best worth having, but, with a view to these, regulates his ideas of right and wrong entirely by the average opinion round him. And, so far as young people are concerned, this is the most dangerous temptation of 'the world.' Boys at school, partly because they live so much together, are particularly sensitive to public opinion. They cannot get away from it. Now there are various false and degrading notions which prevail at different times or in different sets at school. One is that it is allowable to give an entirely false impression on some matter of importance, if the words used are, by a juggle, such as might fit the facts. This is 'vanity'; there is nothing in it, for words are merely the means of conveying information. Such a shuffle is only different from an ordinary lie in being double, a lie to yourself, as well as a lie to the other person deceived. Again, some people say that bad and risky talking does not matter, if it does not go further than that. Our Lord says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."<sup>1</sup> "I say unto you that every idle word that men shall speak, they

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, v. 8.

shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."<sup>1</sup> Again, many persons console themselves by thinking or saying that they are not worse than other people. This is no standard at all. It is 'vanity.' Christ's kingdom is not filled up by competitive examination on the terms that, if there are no good candidates for the places, these must go to inferior or 'weak' candidates.

These are specimens of the way in which 'the world' tries to drag us down. In every society, not least at school, there are various low notions as to one's duty, making things more easy for us, very 'vain' or empty as a rule (as we can easily see if we use our brains, given us for the purpose), which bring down the level of morals and character. But what we undertake is to follow what our Lord tells us, to act as a colony from heaven in the world, and make it better,<sup>2</sup> which is Christ's own work, not to follow each other like a flock of sheep through a gap in a hedge.

Then as to the flesh. We have got a body, and it has desires or pleasures ('lusts'), some of which, though not wrong in themselves, are very

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xii. 36, 37.

<sup>2</sup> Colossians, iii. 1 etc.

apt to become wrong by being indulged too far, or by getting in the way of our duty or of what is worth doing, while some are sinful in themselves. As to the first class, everybody takes pleasure more or less in eating and drinking, everybody likes rest at times, whether it takes the form of sleeping or doing nothing, or looking on at games, or talking to one's friends, or reading something light. These desires or pleasures are not wrong in themselves ; if they had been, our Lord would not have made the wine at Cana, in order that the wedding-party might enjoy themselves.<sup>1</sup> But they are wrong when they are indulged beyond proper limits, or when they interfere with something else that we ought to do. Everybody knows that it is wrong and low to drink too much and get drunk. But people sometimes over-eat themselves as well. Excess in eating, or persistently eating things that one knows are bad for one, is not only degrading, since it is a poor thing to be a slave to one's own stomach ; it is also wrong for this reason, that it makes people ill for the time and sometimes permanently, and good health is quite the most valuable part of any man's outfit for doing his work well and doing good in the world.

<sup>1</sup> St. John, ii. 7-10.

But, besides this very low kind of excess, a great many people spend too much money on eating and drinking. Now what money we have is given, or rather lent us by God as a trust, to be used rightly, and it is certainly making a wrong and very selfish use of it (of which its Owner does not approve) if we spend so much on ourselves that we have nothing, or hardly anything, to spare for people who have not enough to eat, or in some way have not got the chances of education or of knowing Christ's religion that we have. Everyone ought to give systematically to help those who are worse off than themselves ; some say a tenth of what one has—there is no harm in giving more. Besides this, our Father is generosity itself,<sup>1</sup> and it is being like Him to be generous according to one's means, for instance, in giving presents to one's relations. And even as to the money that we spend on ourselves, there is a duty to spend it in the best way. If, for instance, anyone wished to play some game that cost money, and could not afford it without cutting down his expenses in eating and drinking, it would be poor, and therefore unlike a Christian, to prefer the eating. Just so it is with resting. Some people do hardly anything else. They

<sup>1</sup> Romans, viii. 32 ; 1 Timothy, vi. 17, etc.

are 'slack,' as it is called, that is, they neglect what they know to be their duty at the time, especially in exercising and improving their minds, and so make themselves less efficient for the future, less able to be of use in the world. And when being 'good at games' gives people such power of leading and influencing others as it does nowadays both at school and outside it, it is almost as bad not to take proper trouble about games as to neglect cultivating one's mind. We know what happened to the men in the parable who made the most of the 'talents' that they had—and what happened to the man who thought it was not worth the trouble.<sup>1</sup>

As to working out these principles in detail, we have had brains given us for the purpose, and the Holy Spirit is promised (especially in Confirmation) to guide Christians at all times,—particularly where it is really difficult for them to see what is right, which is not very often the case; if the matter seems evenly balanced, it will probably be safe to decide against one's own personal inclination. But there is one thing that makes it impossible for anyone to decide impartially and rightly where the body and its pleasures are concerned. If we once get into

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xxv. 14, etc.

the habit of letting it say, 'I must have this,' 'I can't do without that,' we lose control over what ought to be our slave. Like fire, the body is 'a good servant, but a bad master.' It is quite unreasonable and 'upnish,' and must be made to know its place. And if anyone, from having plenty of money to spend, finds that he does not have enough occasions naturally arising for bringing it into order by refusing it what it wants, he ought to make them, so as to be quite sure that he can go without things if he chooses. To have this power is worth anything, and is the main advantage to be gained from fasting, of which we hear in the Bible.<sup>1</sup> To be master of his own body somehow is a necessity for a Christian, if he is to be free to do his duty;—he must be 'in training,' like anyone who wants to win a race or a boxing-match. "Everyone who contends in the games," says St. Paul,<sup>2</sup> "is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore run as not uncertainly (that is, not as if I did not know what the goal was), so I box not as one that beateth the air (that is, as if I had no real antagonist); but I hit my body in the face and treat it as a slave,"

<sup>1</sup> For instance, St. Matthew, iv. 2; ix. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians, ix. 24-27.

lest by any means after that I have preached to others I myself should be rejected." All that is at stake.

But, besides these desires, there are others that are wrong altogether, except in connection with God's institution of marriage, about which we need not trouble ourselves at present. And if it is so necessary to be master of oneself as regards eating and drinking, it is a matter of life and death to be able to restrain, and to make it a habit to restrain one's thoughts and language and reading so that they shall be clean. Anyone who 'lets himself go' about matters of purity (or cleanliness) and morals is sure to be laying up for himself a difficult time some day, since temptations of this kind, in which the devil and the flesh are most closely allied, are very strong, very subtle, and often come very unexpectedly. But, besides the necessity to a loyal and reasonable soldier of defending the outworks if the fortress is to hold out—of keeping his thoughts clean if he is not to fall further still—it is in itself one of the very first duties of a Christian as such to keep a clean mind. A dirty-minded follower of Jesus Christ, 'born of a pure Virgin,' 'and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin,'<sup>1</sup> is

<sup>1</sup> Collect for Christmas Day, and Proper Preface for Christmas Day.

certainly a singular and unlovely combination. There is no way in which our Lord raised the thought and ideals of the world more than in the matter of purity. He did not say much about it (those who care about it usually do not), but what he did say was quite sufficient. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God";<sup>1</sup> which implies necessarily that others will not.

Then again as to talking about subjects that should not be talked of at all, or talking about things in a nasty way and making broad or dirty jokes. This is more shameless and destructive to one's self-respect—it fixes the thing, besides the additional dirt supplied by those with whom we talk, which often sticks. Here again our Lord gives us plain warning; "Those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man."<sup>2</sup> And we are also answerable for the effect on those with whom we talk. We may think that we are ourselves strong enough to stop when and where we like (in which we are probably wrong), but at all events we cannot tell that others are so. If anyone who is 'not particular' in his conversation could see the later effect of it on some of those with whom he talks, polluting their minds as a

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, v. 8.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, xv. 18.

river in a manufacturing district is spoilt by refuse and sewage, and depriving them of all natural horror of what is filthy, he would probably be aghast. He would say, 'I did not think,' or 'I did not know.' But as we have plain directions given us by One whom we profess to follow, and brains to understand them and work them out, these excuses will not stand. To lead others wrong is the work of the devil himself, our Lord's great enemy. And those who lead others wrong who are younger or weaker than themselves are spoken of by our Lord much in the same way as he speaks of Judas, who betrayed Him. He puts His followers on the same footing as Himself.<sup>1</sup> "Woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born."<sup>2</sup> "Woe unto him through whom the offences come!" (that is, who makes some one else 'stumble' or go wrong). "It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."<sup>3</sup> Such people are enemies and traitors to Him just like Judas.

If the outworks are defended, the 'body of

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xxv. 40; St. Luke, ix. 48.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, xxvi. 24.

<sup>3</sup> St. Luke, xvii. 1, 2.

the place' will be safe. If anyone keeps his thoughts and words clean, he will not be in much danger of going wrong in act, which is so infinitely worse.

But there is a further duty which rests on a Christian. He is pledged to fight against what is unclean and devilish first in himself, and then also in those around him. He can do them good by example and by his influence, by turning a conversation when it is getting on to risky ground, by declining to laugh at a broad joke, that is to say 'not being ashamed of Christ crucified.' But there are times when he may have to go further than this, if he is not to be a disloyal soldier. If the state of things round him has got really bad in his House or in any part of the School that he is in contact with, if there is a nest of dirty and corrupting conversation, still more if dirty acts are committed, he is bound to get it stopped somehow, or he is responsible for its going on. If he cannot manage this otherwise (which he very likely can do—it has been done plenty of times before now by boys in real schools, not in books), he can in the last resort tell his parents of it. The custom of not telling tales or volunteering information against those with whom one lives is in all ordinary cases a very good one; in fact it is

necessary (as a general rule) for maintaining friendly relations among boys or men thrown closely together, but it is not one of Christ's commandments nor entitled to override our duty, and there are things which ought to be absolutely outlawed in a society of Christians and gentlemen. And anyone who does not take means to stop them when he could is responsible for their continuance.

One may sum up the whole by referring to what St. Paul says about it.<sup>1</sup> "Shew yourselves therefore imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, even as Christ loved you, and gave himself up for you as an offering and sacrifice to God 'for an odour of a sweet smell.'<sup>2</sup> But fornication and all uncleanness or 'covetousness,'<sup>3</sup> let it not be even named among you, as becomes holy persons, nor filthiness, nor foolish-talking, or jesting,<sup>4</sup> which are not befitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know for certain that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor 'covetous' man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." (We were made at baptism 'inheritors of the kingdom

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians, v. 1, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus, xxix. 25, 41.

<sup>3</sup> That is, greediness for sensual pleasures.

<sup>4</sup> It is quite plain what sort of talk and jokes are meant.

of heaven'; this seems a sure way of getting disinherited). "Let no man deceive you with vain words,"<sup>1</sup> St. Paul goes on, "for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." That is to say, "Do not mind what nonsense people tell you, such as 'talking does not matter,' or, 'lots of people are like that';—this sort of thing God hates."

We have spoken of the world and the flesh as enemies to be renounced, and now we must say something of the devil. But really we have said a good deal about him already, for he uses the temptations of the world and the flesh in the way most likely to effect his object of leading people wrong, if possible—the desires of the flesh to give him a handle or hold upon us, the opinions of the world to make what is low and wicked appear less bad. He is the author of all deceit, for "he is a liar, and the father of it,"<sup>2</sup> and 'shuffling' is, as we have seen, a slightly disguised form of lying, whatever 'the world' may say. Cruelty and spitefulness, whether by deed or word, are also works of the devil, who often seems to take pleasure in tormenting Christian

<sup>1</sup> A good instance of the 'vanity of this wicked world.'

<sup>2</sup> St. John, viii. 44.

people whom he has not much chance of getting hold of. Irreverence and blasphemy (jokes about the Gospels or points in the Creed are not unfrequently blasphemous) also come from him —what can please him more than to have the persons and things he hates turned into ridicule? But in general “he that committeth sin is of the devil ;” . . . “for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil ;”<sup>1</sup> and for a sworn soldier of Christ not to join heartily in the fighting is simple treason.

When these ‘temptations’ are spoken of, we naturally think of our Lord’s temptation. How He was tempted during the rest of the forty days we do not know, but as to the part that He told to His disciples, one can see, if one looks into it, how real the temptation must have been.<sup>2</sup> The suggestion put into His mind that He should turn stones into bread was to make Him use His power as God merely for His own benefit (which He never would do), and so lower His work by taking away from its unselfish character. But it seems so harmless! Casting Himself from a pinnacle of the Temple would have been presuming on God’s care of Him as a

<sup>1</sup> I John, iii. 8.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, iv. 1-11.

man, forcing God to save Him, and at the same time would have been advertising Himself, doing miracles for show to *force* the Jews to believe on Him ; it might have saved Him endless trouble and disappointment, but it is not God's way to force men. The offer of all the kingdoms of the world on one condition was a temptation 'to do evil that good might come,' and this suggestion must have appealed to Him—how much good He could do if He were in the position of the Roman Emperor, for instance, since even a tolerably good man on the throne meant the happiness of millions. The devil was evidently trying to divert and lower His purpose just a little in some way ; coarser temptations might come later. Now the devil is not likely to have such a high opinion of us. But the point of the matter is that these temptations were real to our Lord, as coarser ones would not have been, that they actually appealed to Him as a man, so that in temptation, as in all other ways, He can now really feel for us. "It behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren." "In that he himself hath *suffered* being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."<sup>1</sup> "We have not an high

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews, ii. 17, 18.

priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses, but one in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."<sup>1</sup> That is to say, we can tell our temptations to one who thoroughly understands them as man, and who is able to help us out of, or through them, since He is Almighty God.

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Lord, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee the only God ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*<sup>2</sup>

O God, whose blessed Son was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life ; Grant us, we beseech thee, that, having this hope, we may purify ourselves, even as he is pure ; that, when he shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto him in his eternal and glorious king-

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews, iv. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Collect for the 18th Sunday after Trinity.

dom ; where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, he liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

O Saviour of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us, save us and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Collect for the 6th Sunday after the Epiphany.

<sup>2</sup> From the Order for the Visitation of the Sick.

### III

## THE PROMISES MADE FOR US WHEN WE WERE CHRISTENED

### *2. What we Believe.*

*Catechist.*

REHEARSE the Articles<sup>1</sup> of thy belief.

*Answer.*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker  
of heaven and earth :

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,  
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of  
the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
Was crucified, dead and buried, He descended  
into Hell ; The third day He rose again from  
the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth

<sup>1</sup> Divisions or clauses of the Creed, each stating a fact  
about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, or God's  
kingdom, the Church. Of course they do not mean the  
Thirty-Nine Articles.

at the right hand of God the Father Almighty ;  
From thence He shall come to judge the quick<sup>1</sup>  
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost ; the holy Catholic<sup>2</sup> Church ; the Communion of Saints ; The Forgiveness of sins ; The Resurrection of the body, And the Life everlasting. *Amen.*<sup>3</sup>

*Question.*

What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief?

*Answer.*

First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world.

Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind.

Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth<sup>4</sup> me, and all the elect people of God.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Those who may be alive at the time.

<sup>2</sup> Universal, not confined to any race or class.

<sup>3</sup> Certainly, that is, "I do believe all this," not quite the same as at the end of prayers. The Apostles' Creed ('Credo,' I believe) was not composed by the Apostles, but a large part of it dates back to near their times (100—150 A.D.). All its 'articles' can be proved from the Bible. See Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> Makes holy.

<sup>5</sup> Anyone who is baptized, and wishing and trying to

A large part of this short statement of our faith as Christians does not need explanation, though references to some of those passages in the Bible on which it depends will be found at the end of the book. We may pass over the first section, merely saying that 'the Father,' as used of God in the Creed, refers in the first instance to Him as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>1</sup> though, as we have seen, this involves His being our Father too (see pp. 22, 23).

In the second section 'our Lord' means not only our Master (though this is quite true as well), but also the word 'Lord' is (through Latin, *Dominus*; Greek, *κύριος*<sup>2</sup>) a representative of the Hebrew 'Jehovah,' a word which is only used of God Himself. It is just the same when

do right, is certainly one of the 'elect people of God,' and anyone who really wishes to be 'elect' can become so. There is no favouritism with God, and it appears that those who seem to have better chances, or 'privileges,' as they are called (as the Jews certainly had), are given them in order that they may do good to the world and 'leaven' it, and they are responsible for doing this to the best of their power (Romans, iii. 1, 2; St. Luke, xi. 52; xii. 47, 48); God is absolutely just, and any theory which supposes that He is not *must* be distorted and untrue.

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xiv. 6, 7, 9.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians, xii. 3.

in the 'Nicene Creed'<sup>1</sup> (the longer Creed in the Communion Service) the Holy Ghost is spoken of as 'the Lord.'

The fact that Jesus Christ, who lived on the earth as a man, was God, is still further explained in the words 'Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.' The angel Gabriel said to the Blessed Virgin, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."<sup>2</sup> This is what is called the Incarnation, the 'Word being made flesh,'<sup>3</sup> God the Son taking a human body and nature. And yet, though He had no Father but God, still He was really a man, not merely pretending to be one, since He was 'Born of the Virgin Mary.'<sup>4</sup>

The mention of Pontius Pilate gives the date of the Crucifixion. You know that in ancient

<sup>1</sup> Enlarged from a Creed already in use at Cæsarea in Palestine, and accepted at the 'General Council' (or representative Parliament of all Christians) held at Nice or Nicæa, 325 A.D. ; combined with the Creed in use at Jerusalem, and approved as we have it (except the words 'and the Son' in its last paragraph) at the General Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke, i. 35. <sup>3</sup> St. John, i. 14.

<sup>4</sup> See Proper Preface for Christmas Day in the Communion Service.

times the commonest way of giving a date was to mention some man who was in office at the time, just as the Romans named their years from the Consuls,<sup>1</sup> and the Athenians from the senior Archon. And the point is that our Lord's death for us was not a parable or anything of that sort, but a definite historical fact, at a definite time.

The words "He descended into Hell" have caused a great deal of unnecessary difficulty. The word 'Hell,' when the Creed was translated into English, did not necessarily mean the place of torment, but is also used for the place where men's souls are after death. The Latin from which the sentence was translated is "Descendit ad inferos"—"He went down to the people below," or, "the world below,"—which makes the real meaning quite clear. So St. Peter in the Acts said that Christ's soul "was not left in hell," where 'hell' means the same thing—the world of the spirits of the dead.<sup>2</sup> And our Lord said to the thief, "To-day shalt thou be *with me* in Paradise."<sup>3</sup> This 'article' of the Creed is not a mere statement of a fact which we do not fully understand, but has this distinct meaning to us,

<sup>1</sup> Cæsar, Gallic War, i. 2; St. Luke, ii. 2; iii. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> In Greek it is *εἰς ἀδην*; Acts, ii. 31.

<sup>3</sup> St. Luke, xxiii. 43.

that, just as our Lord went through the whole of a man's life on earth that he might understand and sympathize in it all, so he also went through the state that comes after death until the Resurrection. As the hymn says :

“Christ leads me through no darker rooms  
Than He went through before ;  
He that unto Christ's kingdom comes  
Must enter by this door ;”—

that is, death, with all that it involves.

‘The right hand of God the Father’ means the place of honour and authority. As it says in the Epistle to the Hebrews,<sup>1</sup> “He, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.” And St. Stephen saw Jesus ‘at the right hand of God’ standing to receive His servant.<sup>2</sup>

We have said something already about what the Holy Ghost does ; we must say a little more here ; and there is a great deal besides to be learnt by each boy or man from his own experience. The Nicene Creed says that He ‘spake by the Prophets,’<sup>3</sup> which He certainly did ; He

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews, x. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Acts, vii. 55. See Collect for St. Stephen's Day.

<sup>3</sup> It must be remembered that, though the Prophets

was constantly teaching the Jews, through this man or through that, higher and higher morals and religion as they became at all capable of taking them in. The Jews were the 'elect' people, chosen to teach the world,<sup>1</sup> a purpose which, through the perverseness of most of them, they fulfilled imperfectly. But the influence of the Holy Spirit was not confined to the Jews, since all the good and high thoughts that men have are due to His help, and some things in Plato and in Sophocles and in other heathen writers are plainly due to Him ;—they are divine.

When He had taken possession of the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost they were transformed, —different men both in wisdom and courage. And it is the Holy Ghost who 'confirms' people now ; the Bishop and the service are merely the appointed means to this. It is He who both puts good intentions into people's minds, and shows them how to carry them out, and gives them courage and energy to do so.<sup>2</sup> But certainly did foretell a Messiah or deliverer, with greater clearness as time went on (see especially Isaiah, liii.), they were, in the main, preachers. 'Prophet' means a declarer or spokesman, either of God's intentions, as in the prophecies about our Lord, or, more usually, of God's will and commands.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 46, note 5.

<sup>2</sup> Romans, viii. 9, 14; Ephesians, iii. 16; Acts, iv. 29-31.

this does not make men machines or take away their responsibility. Our will is free; we can listen to good suggestions or put them aside; we can try to carry out good resolutions or let them drop. So that the Holy Spirit does not force us, but is like a good friend, giving us good advice and helping us as much as we will let Him, but not taking the responsibility for the way we live off our shoulders.

The Church is, as we have already seen, that society which our Lord established for carrying on His work on earth,—it is part of His kingdom (another part being in heaven). It is holy, of course; that is what it is for; no one who is not trying to live a good life really belongs to it. ‘Saints’ is one of the earliest names for Christ’s followers;<sup>1</sup> they were called so when ‘Christian’ was only a nickname.

‘Catholic’<sup>2</sup> means general or universal, as it says in the ‘Te Deum,’ “the Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee.” But we shall see better what the word

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians, i. 2; Romans. xv. 25, 26. In the way in which the word is commonly used now, as when we speak of ‘Saints’ Days’ or ‘the Saints in the Calendar,’ it means those who are in various ways examples of what all Christians ought to be.

<sup>2</sup> καθολικός, from καθόλου, καθ' ὅλον, ‘in general.’

means if we contrast the Christian Church with what went before it. The Jews thought that the Church was confined to them. Those who came with St. Peter were surprised that the Holy Ghost should have fallen on Cornelius and his friends, who were Gentiles, and those Christian Jews who heard his account afterwards at Jerusalem were equally astonished.<sup>1</sup> But the exclusiveness of the Jews did not stop there. The Pharisees considered even Jews who were not learned in the law as of no account in God's sight. "This people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed."<sup>2</sup> The disciples did not wish our Lord to be troubled with mere children:—

"Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them."<sup>3</sup>

Now the 'Catholic Church' of Christ is the exact opposite of all this exclusiveness. It is not confined to one nation, or to civilized nations. There are Christians in most parts of the world,

<sup>1</sup> Acts, x. 45; xi. 2, 3, 18.

<sup>2</sup> St. John, vii. 49. It was much in the same way that the Greek philosophers looked down on the ignorant rabble.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew, xix. 13.

belonging to all sorts of races. To take one strong instance, the inhabitants of Terra del Fuego, at the south end of South America, were a race of very low savages, living to a large extent from hand to mouth on shell-fish, stealing whenever they got a chance, and practising horrible heathen customs, such as killing their parents when they got old and useless. So degraded were they that Darwin, who had seen them, spoke of them as people who could not be raised or civilized, saying 'that it was utterly useless to send missionaries to such a set of savages, probably the lowest of the human race.' But first an ex-captain of the Navy lost his life by starvation in trying to found a mission among them, and, following his example, good men devoted themselves to making them Christians, and the change in them was such that Darwin, when he found out about it, used always after that to subscribe to the South American Missionary Society which had taught them to be Christians, with all that that involves. They had become a part of the Holy Catholic Church, with all the means that God provides for helping and raising those who belong to it. In the next place, this Church is not confined to one class. Many people who are poor and uneducated are in life and conduct as good Christians as there can be,

and, besides that, they get an education from reading the Bible and trying to understand it, with the help of the Holy Spirit; and, from learning to care for the feelings of others, they often become in essentials gentlemen and ladies, so that they are altogether raised and ennobled, as one would expect. And children are, so far as their knowledge carries them, sometimes very good Christians; in truthfulness and humility and simplicity and candour some of them are models of what Christians should be.<sup>1</sup> God, 'who will have all men to be saved,'<sup>2</sup> shuts out from His Church no one who will accept His conditions.

But what is meant by 'the Communion of Saints'? It is partly the same as the Catholic Church, but this is rather the Church as it exists on earth, looked at more or less from our human point of view, though it is a divine institution. 'The Communion (or fellowship, or society) of Saints' is the true Church, as God sees it, those who are trying to be holy on earth, those who are holy and are becoming more and more perfectly so, 'having departed and being with Christ, which is far better.'<sup>3</sup> Death does not separate them; plainly no one ceases to be a

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark, x. 14, 15.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Timothy, ii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Philippians, i. 23.

part of Christ's body, or the child of God, by dying:

"For all the servants of our King,  
On earth, in heaven, are one."

And so the prayer which forms so essential a part of the Communion Service, the prayer for Christ's Church, though it is mainly, as its name implies, for the 'militant' Church,—still fighting, under stress of temptation, against the world, the flesh, and the devil, the part which has most need to be prayed for—also mentions all Christ's servants 'departed this life in His faith and fear,' and so includes the whole body of which our Lord is the head, 'the whole family in heaven and earth,'<sup>1</sup> who all have 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.'<sup>2</sup> There is no society so grand as that.

The 'Forgiveness of Sins' is through our Lord's death. As He Himself said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should have eternal life."<sup>3</sup>

As to the 'Resurrection of the Body' difficulties have often been raised. People have said, "How can the body rise again? It is not merely broken up altogether after death, but the

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians, iii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians, iv. 4-6.

<sup>3</sup> St. John, iii. 14, 15.

particles of which it was made up pass into plants, and so into animals, and thus perhaps into other men, so that several men might claim parts of the same body." Now as a matter of fact the body is constantly changing in life as well. Particles of it are worn out and then get thrown off, so that in about seven years (they say) the whole of it is changed, bit by bit, and yet the person remains the same. One's individuality then, which is the only matter of importance, does not depend on the particles being the same. But difficulties of this sort were not left for people of our own day to raise; they were already urged in St. Paul's time, and he answered them:

"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the

glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.”<sup>1</sup> That is to say, if we put the language into more modern form,—“But some one will say, ‘How are the dead raised up, and what body do they have to rise with?’ That is a foolish question; the way in which corn grows will suggest the answer; a grain of corn (wheat or other grain) sown does not rise again into a wheat-plant without being withered first; and you do not sow the wheat-plant—it grows perhaps a yard high, and its roots are nearly as long—all that would not go into the mere seed, but God makes the seed the germ of the wheat-plant, according to His arrangement in nature, and each seed rises into its own individual body. Besides, God is not tied to make one kind of body only; even on the earth there is a great variety,—bodies of men, and beasts, and fish, and birds. There are

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians, xv. 35-44.

also the heavenly bodies, which have a beauty different from that of earthly bodies, and, what is more, each star has its own individual beauty. If there is such variety in His works that we know, He can surely make another kind of body different in its conditions and nature from our present one. And the resurrection-body is different, for the body buried (which is like the seed) is liable to decay, but the resurrection-body is not ; the body buried is weak, but the future body is not ; and in fact it is a spiritual body." A spiritual body must be something very different from anything that we can even imagine. But the fact is that our powers of imagination are pretty closely limited to things which are more or less like something that we have had experience of. It was only with great difficulty that people, before the other side of the world was discovered, could imagine or believe in people walking, as they said, with their heads downwards. And so, as we have no experience of anything like the body of the Resurrection at present,<sup>1</sup> we must be content to do without understanding what it will be like, knowing that it will be a perfect body, since God's power is

<sup>1</sup> It is very doubtful how far we are safe in arguing from our Lord's body after His Resurrection, especially as we have no full description of it

not limited to what man can understand, and that we shall be perfectly ourselves again after the Resurrection,—the same persons that we are now.

The Creed does not contain the word 'Trinity,' but it of course implies the fact in its threefold division. The word itself is merely Latin for 'Threeness,'<sup>1</sup> and its meaning is that, though there is one God, as the Jews believed, yet there are three 'Persons,' the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Various attempts have been made to explain this. The shamrock with its little threefold leaf has been used as an emblem of it. Then there is the sun, its light,<sup>2</sup> and its heat.<sup>3</sup> They are three; but we cannot separate them; they are always together, and we cannot think of the sun without, or as existing before, its light and its heat, though both come from the sun, and the heat (in a way) from the light.<sup>4</sup> Still, the Trinity must remain a 'mystery,' something which men cannot fully understand. This however ought not to make it at all more difficult to believe. As we said before, men can only understand a thing when they know something more or less like it already. Among the stories that travellers used to bring back, before the world

<sup>1</sup> This was the only word for the 'Trinity' in Old English.

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews, i. 3.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew, iii. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *Ælfric's Homilies*, about 990 A.D.

was so well known, it was by no means always the untrue ones that were disbelieved. Herodotus could not believe that the Phœnicians (who, according to the story, had sailed round Africa, starting by the Red Sea) could, as they said, have had the sun on their right (that is, to the north of them); which they were bound to do when they had passed the Equator, and were rounding the Cape. The one thing which he could not believe is to us, with fuller knowledge, the best proof that they actually went where they were said to have gone.<sup>1</sup> Now it is not in the least likely that God's nature should lie within or close to our very limited experience, and if all our religion were of this kind, easy for men to understand and define, we should be quite safe in concluding that it had been made by some *men*. The fact that there is one God, and yet that there is the Father who made us, the Son who redeemed us, and the Holy Ghost who, if we choose, will make us holy and good, is implied throughout the New Testament, and sometimes comes out clearly even within one or two verses, for instance at our Lord's baptism, where

<sup>1</sup> Herodotus, iv. 42, §§ 5-7. Whether they had actually sailed round the Cape has been doubted, but at all events the very part of the story which Herodotus could not believe must certainly have happened if they went there at all.

the Son is baptized, the Spirit descends upon Him, and the Father acknowledges Him from heaven,<sup>1</sup> or where St. Paul prays that 'the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost' may be with all the Christians of Corinth.<sup>2</sup> We are told quite enough for practical purposes, as much as it is of any use for us to know, probably as much as we are capable of understanding.

We have been speaking of 'the Creed,' and what we 'believe,' and have not said anything yet about what we mean by 'believing,'—about what 'faith' is. Now faith has been defined as 'confidence in what we do not see.'<sup>3</sup> But it will make what we mean clearer if we take one or two examples of it,—for instance, as regards any well-known facts in history. We believe that Julius Cæsar came to Britain, that Charles I. was beheaded, that the Duke of Wellington won the Battle of Waterloo. Up to a certain point our belief in what is stated in the Creed is of precisely the same kind. We believe both that Julius Cæsar came to Britain and that Jesus Christ rose from the dead on good evidence,—

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, iii. 16, 17.      <sup>2</sup> 2 Corinthians, xiii. 14.

<sup>3</sup> The definition in Hebrews, xi. 1, comes to much the same as this.

that is to say, because they are certainly true. But there is this distinction between our belief in ordinary historical facts and our belief as Christians. The belief in the landing of Julius Cæsar makes no real difference to us. It is interesting, and when we begin to put facts in history together and understand them this trains and enlarges our minds. But that is all, as a rule; there is no need or inducement to live and behave in one way more than another because Julius Cæsar did not conquer Britain, or because William the Conqueror did. But the facts in the Creed concern us personally. They are not about dead persons, but about God the Father who made us, placed us in a comfortable position in life, with parents who are fond of us, and opportunities of making ourselves and other people better; about our Lord Jesus Christ who came into the world and lived in it and died 'for *us* men and for *our* salvation'; and about the Holy Ghost, who is always trying to help us. These are not mere dry facts which do not concern us. Anyone who really believes such facts, if he has ordinarily decent feelings and some power of being grateful, will try to make some return for all this in the only way in which it can be done, 'by showing forth God's praise not only with his lips but in his life'; and if he does

not do this, we are bound to conclude that he does not believe the facts—he certainly does not believe them in any real sense. It is not so difficult to disbelieve a statement in one's acts, so to speak. For instance, it is very dangerous to walk along a cliff in twilight; the line of the sea looks like the edge of the cliff. This is all the more dangerous if the cliff has been breaking away, and old footpaths lead over the edge. Now if anyone who heard that some one was thinking of risking his neck in this way were to warn him against it, and the person warned were to say 'Thank you, I quite believe what you say,' and then went along the cliff, one would be right in concluding that he had not really believed at all. It is just the same with the facts about God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost—they lead so directly to action that if we do not let them affect our lives we cannot be said to believe them at all.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of course we are not 'bound to believe' anything but what is true. But since the facts only want looking into honestly, in an unprejudiced way, for us to see their truth, and since the experience of trying to live a Christian life will show anyone that God does help him (which is the best evidence that anyone can have,—his own personal experience), it is not unnatural that the Catechism should say that we are 'bound to believe' in the same

But there is one part of the Creed, the central part in more senses than one, about which we must say something more. We call ourselves 'Christians'—that is, believers in Jesus as the 'Christ'<sup>1</sup> or 'Messiah,' which means the 'Anointed,' that is to say, one sent and commissioned by God to save the world. What does all this mean? We are constantly saying in the service that Jesus Christ was 'born of the Virgin Mary,' or that He 'was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man,' probably without thinking very much what this really amounts to.

And no doubt for all our thinking we shall not ever thoroughly understand it. But we can, if we try, get some dim notion of what the condescension and self-sacrifice was for God, who is almighty, to take upon Him the limitations and weaknesses of a human body; for God, who is absolutely wise, to live in the midst of human ignorance, and stupidity, and prejudice; for God, who is entirely holy, and true, and good, to be constantly in contact with the low notions, the shuffling and deceit, and the wickedness of men.

way as we are 'bound to do,' what was promised in our name. See St. John, vii. 17; and Appendix, if you feel any further difficulty about this.

<sup>1</sup> 'Christ' is properly not a name, but a title.

Perhaps we can get a little more light upon it from another side, from instances in which His servants have followed Him—at a great distance. There have been clergymen who have given up pleasant livings in the country, with easy and promising work before them, either to go abroad into hardships and danger as missionaries, or into difficult disheartening work in the slums of London. This is splendid ; but it is a very distant and dim reflection of what our Lord did in coming into the world. There is another act which comes a little nearer. There was a very good man in the seventeenth century who was chaplain to some galley-slaves, convicts, men who had been guilty of all sorts of crimes, and who were being punished by having to row galleys, and were kept constantly chained, in a state of filth, misery, and degradation quite indescribable. In trying to do what he could for them he found out that one of them had a wife and children left in great poverty for want of him. So the chaplain persuaded the warders to let him take the convict's place (that he might not be missed), and lived and worked as a galley-slave in that little hell of hardship and misery and evil talk, until (some little time after the change) was discovered, and he was released.

This act will give us some notion (though a *very* insufficient one) of what our Lord did for us, by merely becoming a man, when, as St. Paul says, 'He being originally in the form of God . . . took upon him the form of a slave, being made in the likeness of men.'<sup>1</sup>

But this was not all. He was not born among great people whose position would make His work easier for Him, among rich people who could make His life comfortable, or among educated people who might more or less understand and appreciate His wise teaching. His Mother and her husband Joseph were poor people,—that they were of the old royal family made no difference, as Palestine was then. He was brought up in an obscure town of a despised part<sup>2</sup> of a country which had lost its independence. He worked as a working man, a carpenter,<sup>3</sup> to maintain Himself and His Mother, until he began to teach. And then 'He had not where to lay His head';<sup>4</sup> and it is not very easy to make out how He and His disciples lived at all. But at first, no doubt, people did think a great deal of Him. They had never heard anyone speak like that.<sup>5</sup> They had never seen anyone do the sort of things that

<sup>1</sup> Philippians, ii. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> St. John, i. 46; vii. 52.

<sup>3</sup> St. Mark, vi. 3.

<sup>4</sup> St. Luke, ix. 58.

<sup>5</sup> St. Matthew, vii. 28, 29.

He did.<sup>1</sup> This however did not last; the Pharisees had all along been suspicious of Him, and when He would not come down to their low miserable notions about the Sabbath and how the Law ought to be kept (just as if God loved what is called 'red-tape' above all things), they took sides against Him, and put it about among the people that He did miracles—for people's good—by being in league with Satan,<sup>2</sup> which of course explained His wonderful power satisfactorily! And the people were disappointed about Him in another way. He was not the sort of a Messiah that they thought He ought to have been. Why, when they wanted to make Him a king, He would not have it!<sup>3</sup> And so one part of Palestine after another was closed against Him; He could not teach there with any prospect of success; and though there was a short renewal of His popularity when He made His entry into Jerusalem on the first Palm-Sunday, He disappointed them again by allowing Himself to be arrested, and they were easily persuaded to shout 'Crucify Him,' as an impostor who had cheated their expectations of Him. His life appeared to be a failure. "He was in the world, and the world

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, viii. 27; St. Mark, ii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, xii. 22-32.

<sup>3</sup> St. John, vi. 15.

was made through Him, and the world knew Him not ; He came unto His own, and His own people received Him not.”<sup>1</sup>

But you can bear a good deal of hardship and disappointment and the misunderstanding of the world at large if you have good friends who understand you and will stand by you. Now the Apostles after the Ascension, when they had been able to think over and get into their minds and hearts our Lord’s teaching and example, in the light of His Resurrection, and with the special help of the Holy Ghost,<sup>2</sup> were certainly splendid men. But while our Lord was living as an ordinary man they were very far from perfect, as we know largely from their own candour. They were constantly disputing who of them should be greatest,<sup>3</sup> when he should have put down the Romans and be reigning on earth (as they thought he would do). For before His death they never fully understood what He had come to do, in spite of all the special teaching that He gave them beyond others. Even after the Resurrection, just before He ascended, their old notion cropped out as to what the Messiah ought to do, to ‘restore again the kingdom to Israel.’<sup>4</sup> One

<sup>1</sup> St. John, i. 10, 11.

<sup>2</sup> St. John, xiv. 26.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew, xx. 20-24 ; St. Luke, ix. 46 ; xxii. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Acts, i. 6.

of them betrayed Him ; St. Peter, the foremost of them, once actually attempted to lecture Him ;<sup>1</sup> when in His great agony of mind He wanted their companionship, they went to sleep ;<sup>2</sup> when He was arrested, they all ran away ;<sup>3</sup> and then St. Peter (who had plucked up courage to follow Him) in His presence denied Him with oaths and curses.<sup>4</sup> No, He did not get much help or comfort from His friends.

And then, as if all this self-sacrifice and hardship and disappointment were not enough, there was the last scene of all ;—the Sacrifice of our Lord's death was the completion and crown of the sacrifice of His whole life.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps one may say that some such end to such a life was inevitable,—that when perfect unselfishness, and goodness, and wisdom were on earth they would certainly be hated to the death by the self-interestedness, and baseness, and stupidity and ignorance of 'the world.' This does not clear the principal actors, but gives a share in their guilt to human nature in general, including ourselves, and makes it still more impossible for us to un-

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xvi. 21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, xxvi. 37, 38, 40, 43.

<sup>3</sup> St. Mark, xiv. 50.

<sup>4</sup> St. Matthew, xxvi. 69-75 ; St. Luke, xxii. 61.

<sup>5</sup> Hebrews, x. 8-10.

derstand how God should have loved men at all, much more why He should have come to help them at such a tremendous cost to Himself.<sup>1</sup> What he saw and heard and felt that last night and day of His life—hypocritical and selfish priests, lying witnesses, a bloodthirsty mob, and brutal soldiers were a fine example of the race that He had come to save, and such an exhibition was to Him, who was perfectly good, the most intense moral torture. What more is meant by 'His bearing our sins in His own body on the tree'<sup>2</sup> is probably beyond our understanding. But we can at least understand something of His bodily pain, and though the subject is, no doubt, not pleasant, yet, as it was 'for *us* men, and for *our* salvation,' it is only right that we should think about it, for, unless we understand all that we can, we shall not have even a notion of what our debt to Him amounts to.

When a man was crucified, he was nailed to two crossed pieces of wood, hung up in the air, and left to die slowly amid the jokes and jeers of the spectators. The pain directly and indirectly caused was intense; it was a worse death than being burnt alive, it lasted so much longer. The Son of God was 'crucified for us under Pontius Pilate.'

<sup>1</sup> 1 John, iii. 16; iv. 10.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter, ii. 24.

It is a fact of history ; but it ought to mean rather more to us than any ordinary historical fact.

Of course we ought not to forget the share of God the Father and God the Holy Ghost in our Redemption. “God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son,”<sup>1</sup> and, if we think what it costs parents to part with a son of theirs going as a soldier on a dangerous campaign or as a missionary among savages, we shall have some slight idea of what this meant. Then too God the Holy Ghost is such a ‘guide and friend’ to Christians, if they choose, that our Lord actually said, “It is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you.”<sup>2</sup> But it is not a bad thing to fix one’s mind, for the time at least, on what our Lord Jesus Christ did for us Himself, and try to get some slight notion of what the Creed in the Communion Service means when it says that He who was ‘the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all ages, . . . being of one nature with the Father, by means of whom all things were made,<sup>3</sup> for *us* men and for *our* salva-

<sup>1</sup> St. John, iii. 16 ; 1 John, iv. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> St. John, xvi. 6, 7.

<sup>3</sup> St. John, i. 3 ; Hebrews, i. 2, 3.

tion came down from heaven, . . . and was made man, and was crucified also for *us* under Pontius Pilate.'

And why did He come into the world? He came first of all to die for the sins of the world, that we might be forgiven, and we all want that badly. But He also came to show us what God is like, what His character is, about which mankind, even the Jews, had mostly had very poor, doubtful, and imperfect ideas. You know that it is much easier to understand what a point of character or a virtue is if one sees or hears about an instance of it than if one reads the cleverest account of what the word properly means; much easier, for instance, to understand what courage is from accounts of how one man or another has won the Victoria Cross, or from a life of Gordon, than from the ablest essay about what courage consists of. In the same way the description in the Gospels of the utterly and completely and heroically unselfish life which God lived as a man in the world teaches us more what 'God is Love'<sup>1</sup> means than whole volumes of theology. "Have I been so long time with you," said our Lord, "and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen

<sup>1</sup> 1 John, iv. 16.

me hath seen the Father ; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father ? ”<sup>1</sup>

But our Lord was at the same time the one perfect man.<sup>2</sup> And so He has ‘left us an example, that we should follow His steps.’<sup>3</sup> About this we will say something more later on.

And, besides all this, He took infinite pains, by His teaching, and especially by training His disciples, to found a ‘Church,’ ‘the kingdom of God,’ the society for carrying on His work, to which we belong. It is not like some society founded by a man since dead, as to whom we cannot tell whether he now knows or cares about his society at all. Though the Founder of this society died, “the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.” And He does know and care whether His society is vigorous and successful, whether His army is really fighting the enemies of His kingdom, and He can see too which soldiers are to be depended on, and which are shirking their duty, or wishing

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xiv. 9.

<sup>2</sup> There is of course no contradiction in this, for the godlike man is perfect, and the perfect man is like God. See St. Matthew, v. 48. God made Himself like us, that we might become like Him.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Peter, ii. 21.

to make terms with the enemy. There will, no doubt, be a distribution of honours and promotion (or the opposite of these) at the end of the war,<sup>1</sup> when 'He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.' But it is hardly necessary to look forward to that. The past and present facts mentioned in the Creed ought to supply motive enough for us to try to do all we can to please Jesus Christ, who did so much for us, at such a cost to Himself.

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I give immortal praise  
To God the Father's love  
For all my comforts here  
And better hopes above ;  
He sent His own eternal Son  
To die for sins that man had done.

To God the Son belongs  
Immortal glory too,  
Who bought us with His blood  
From everlasting woe ;  
And now He lives, and now He reigns,  
And sees the fruit of all His pains.

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, x. 32, 33 ; Revelation, iii. 5, 21.

To God the Spirit's name  
 Immortal worship give,  
 Whose new-creating power  
 Makes the dead sinner live ;  
 His work completes the great design,  
 And fills the soul with joy divine.

Almighty God, to Thee  
 Be endless honour done,  
 The undivided Three  
 And the mysterious One ;  
 Where reason fails, with all her powers,  
 There faith prevails, and love adores.

ISAAC WATTS.

When I survey the wondrous Cross  
 On which the Prince of Glory died,  
 My richest gain I count but loss,  
 And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,  
 Save in the death of Christ my God ;  
 All the vain things that charm me most  
 I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet,  
 Sorrow and love flow mingled down ;  
 Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,  
 Or thorns compose so rich a crown ?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were an offering far too small ;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

ISAAC WATTS.

Holy Spirit, Truth divine,  
Dawn upon this soul of mine ;  
Voice of God, and inward Light,  
Wake my spirit, clear my sight.

Holy Spirit, Love divine,  
Glow within this heart of mine ;  
Kindle every high desire,  
Perish self in Thy pure fire.

Holy Spirit, Power divine,  
Fill and nerve this will of mine ;  
By Thee may I strongly live,  
Bravely bear, and nobly strive.

SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

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Almighty and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of his great

humility ; Mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

Almighty God, we beseech thee graciously to behold this thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the cross, who now liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Collect for the Sunday next before Easter.

<sup>2</sup> First Collect for Good Friday.

## IV

### THE PROMISES MADE FOR US WHEN WE WERE CHRISTENED

#### 3. *What we are to do.*

##### *Question.*

YOU said that your Godfathers and Godmother did promise for you, that you should keep God's Commandments. Tell me how many there be.

##### *Answer.*

Ten.

##### *Question.*

Which be they?

##### *Answer.*

The same which God spake in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

*Duty to God.*

- I. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.
- II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous<sup>1</sup> God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me and keep my commandments.
- III. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.
- IV. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou

<sup>1</sup> That is, one who must be worshipped alone, not along with other gods (see First Commandment). The heathen gods were supposed not to mind this, so long as they got enough honour themselves. Worshipping God under some form intended to represent Him, like Jeroboam's calves, comes to much the same thing, since it leads to a degraded and untrue view of God, that is, to the worship of some imaginary being, who is not really God at all.

shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

*Duty to your Neighbour.*

V. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt do no murder.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.

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There are a few things which need explanation in some of the Commandments before we speak of them generally.

First of all, there is the Preface. The best reason or motive for obeying the Command-

ments was to the Jews (as well as to us) gratitude for what God had done for them. He had brought them out of a position of great hardship and degradation in Egypt, and had made them his chosen people,—his 'elect.' But if the Jews had great reason for gratitude, we have infinitely more. God has done, and is doing, much more for us. He has, for one thing, given us the means of escaping from the wickedness and poor commonplace life of those who have no particular object to follow, of becoming 'Christ's faithful soldiers and servants' in this life, and His honoured and promoted servants in the next. And then the cost of what has been done for us was so much greater. You would be thankful, of course, to anyone who put you into some comfortable, or honourable, or useful position which was his to give, even if it cost him no trouble; but it is altogether a different kind of gratitude when a person has done something for you at infinite cost of trouble and hardship, and finally at the cost of his own life. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."<sup>1</sup> "We love him because he first loved us."<sup>2</sup> "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> 1 John, iv. 19.

<sup>3</sup> St. John, xiv. 15.

The Second Commandment was specially necessary for this reason, that the Jews could not possibly represent God by any form, human or otherwise, without degrading their idea of Him, as when Jeroboam made calves, each intended to represent Jehovah, the God who brought them out of the land of Egypt.<sup>1</sup> But to represent our Lord as a man (which He was) is certainly not forbidden by this Commandment.

What is said about 'visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children' has caused a difficulty to many. Now in any case God's mercy is here represented as far greater than his severity; for the punishment lasts to 'the third and fourth generation,' but the mercy to 'thousands' (or, 'a thousand generations') 'in them that love him,' just as the nation of the Jews was blessed for Abraham's faith,<sup>2</sup> and as the effect of a good example goes on from one to another so that you cannot say where it ends. But, besides this, it is a fact in God's government of the world that children and descendants do suffer for the

<sup>1</sup> I Kings, xii. 28. So too names containing the name of the true God (-jah, -iah, see Psalm lxviii. 4) are common enough in the kingdom of Israel, though the worship of the calves still went on.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm cv. 41, 42.

sins of their parents and predecessors. A drunken or immoral father, besides wasting the family property, hands down a weakly constitution to his children. The Roman Empire would have been able to keep out the barbarians and save its subjects untold misery, if it had not been for the selfish civil wars of rival Emperors, the oppressive taxation which ruined its prosperity, and the slackness and timidity of its subjects which had made the population useless for fighting. And the British Empire would be stronger than it is if we had not in the past treated the Irish with injustice.<sup>1</sup> But no one is punished permanently for anything but what he is himself responsible for. What Ezekiel said about this is an admirable illustration of the way in which the Prophets explained and brought out the higher meaning of the Law. The Jews in exile were in the habit of saying, "It is all our fathers' fault; we are being punished for their wickedness,"—a very comfortable doctrine. To this he answers that injustice is among men and not with God, who is absolutely just, and that no real harm will happen to anyone except for what he does himself.<sup>2</sup> God is and must be absolutely just, even if we cannot

<sup>1</sup> Thus much all political parties would admit.

<sup>2</sup> Ezekiel, xviii., especially verses 2, 19, 20, 25.

fully see or understand the working of His machinery. If anyone is poor through no fault of his own, and unable to give much to others, but gives as much as he can, he is only in the position of the poor widow, who with a farthing gave more than all the rich people.<sup>1</sup> If he is naturally not strong in health, it is just as much credit to him to do what good he can. It does not really matter what position we are in, but what use we make of it. God can bring good out of evil; “we know that all things work together for good to them that love God”;<sup>2</sup> and this life, whatever discomforts it may have, is really infinitely short and unimportant compared with what comes after. In fact these troubles are in God’s sight like children’s troubles, very acute while they last, with which our Father and His Son (who went through them and very much more) have infinite sympathy, as good parents have; but which are of the very smallest importance compared with the way in which we take them—that is to say, how the children grow up, and what sort of people their schooling in this world makes them.

The Third Commandment has two sides to it. It certainly forbids all irreverence to God’s name,

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark, xii. 41-44.

<sup>2</sup> Romans, viii. 28.

and therefore when the half-breed Israelite 'blasphemed the Name' in a quarrel, he was stoned for it.<sup>1</sup> But it also specially applied to false oaths by God. In these God was, so to speak, appealed to by name to witness a lie or a faithless promise,—as great an insult to Him as there could be. And therefore the Israelites would not attack the Gibeonites "because the princes of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel."<sup>2</sup>

The Tenth Commandment not only stops at the outset all such attempts to cheat or over-reach one's neighbour as might not be literally stealing, but it also gives a hint that the Commandments could not be kept as God wishes them to be without our wishes and intentions being right—a hint which was worked out to some extent even in the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus, xxiv. 10-16. He was a member of the Israelite community and subject to its law. In the circumstances of the Jews at that time the offence was both blasphemy and high treason.

<sup>2</sup> Joshua, ix. 16-19. It is a very fine piece of elementary morals ; for the excuse was ready that the treaty was got by false pretences. Probably no other nation at the time would have kept its word under such circumstances, and it shows what the effect of their Law on the Jews was meant to be.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, 1 Samuel, xvi. 7 ; Psalm li. 6, 10

But, to take the Ten Commandments generally, we can see that their first object was to teach what may be called the elements of sound religion and sound morals. Now morals have by no means always been recognized as a part of religion, still less as its most important part. The worship of some goddesses in the East encouraged and required wholesale immorality, and the Greeks and Romans had gods who patronized thieves.<sup>1</sup> Nor has the accepted morality of nations always been sound and reasonable. In some countries the mother, after her husband's death, was under the control and government of her eldest son, who then could hardly 'honour his mother.' Various kinds of murder have in many nations been thought little of, especially if the person could be killed without the actual shedding of blood. These Commandments then were not truisms when they were given to the Jews. Even now, any nation which kept them perfectly in their literal meaning could almost dispense with judges and courts and prisons, though it would not necessarily reach a high level of Christian conduct.

<sup>1</sup> Hermes and Laverna. No such immoral deities could be brought in among the Jews if they were loyal to their agreement, for the Lord was a 'jealous' God (see note, p. 80).

They were certainly a revelation to the Jews at the time. And they were put before them as of supreme importance, for they were the title-deeds to Palestine—the ‘covenant’ or contract between God and the Jews, written on the tables of stone which were kept in the ‘Ark of the Covenant’—the agreement being that, if the Jews were loyal to God and moral, God, who had brought them into Canaan, would keep them there and bless and prosper them in every way.<sup>1</sup>

And that was clearly the only way in which they could be trained. Fancy the morality of the Sermon on the Mount being taught to a barbarous nation of slaves 1,300 years or so before the Christian era! If a father wants his son to be a good classical scholar he does not begin by teaching him the rules of ‘*oratio obliqua*’ or the uses of *āv*. The child must learn to read and write first of all, and then begin at the beginning of a Latin grammar. As time went on, explanations of the Law, and what the Prophets said, did carry morals higher—for instance, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might,”<sup>2</sup> and “Thou shalt love

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Exodus, xxiii. 20-33; xxiv. 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Deuteronomy, vi. 5.

thy neighbour as thyself."<sup>1</sup> But in general the lessons that the Jews had to learn were (1) that a good life was of supreme importance in God's sight, (2) what the elements of a good life were. When they had learnt the rudiments they could have some chance of understanding higher religion and morality. As St. Paul says, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ."<sup>2</sup>

Now if we look at the 'Duty to God' and 'Duty to your Neighbour,' we shall see how much the standard has been raised, and then we can look at the way in which this came about, and the principles on which it rests.

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*Question.*

What dost thou  
chiefly learn by  
these Command-  
ments?

*Answer.*

I learn two things:  
my duty towards  
God, and my duty

<sup>1</sup> Leviticus, xix. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Galatians, iii. 24; see too iv. 1-5

towards my Neighbour.

*Question.*

What is thy duty towards God?

*Answer.*

My duty towards God<sup>1</sup> is to believe in him, to fear him,<sup>2</sup> and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon

My duty as regards God is to believe in him, to be afraid of offending him, and to love him sincerely and heartily, thinking what reasons I have for loving him, and trying hard to show this love in my life; to worship him (really and not as a form), to thank him for what he has done and does for me, to trust him entirely, whatever trouble

<sup>1</sup> 'God' of course includes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It would not be a bad thing to go through the Duty towards God, taking it of each Person of the Trinity, and thinking what reasons there are for doing what it says in each case.

<sup>2</sup> In the same way as one would do anything sooner than make one's Father angry with one.

him, to honour his holy Name and his Word,<sup>1</sup> and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

or difficulties I am in, and to pray to him whenever I want help to do right, or anything else, to honour his Name and all that belongs to him, particularly his Word, and honestly to try my best to do what my Master wishes all my life.

*Question.*

What is thy duty towards thy Neighbour?

*Answer.*

My duty towards my Neighbour is to love him as my-

My duty as regards any boy or man with whom I am brought in contact<sup>2</sup> is

<sup>1</sup> The spirit or real meaning of the Third Commandment, in one of its applications. Otherwise the Duty towards God includes the sense of the first four Commandments, without taking each Commandment separately.

<sup>2</sup> This is what our Lord teaches in the parable of the Good Samaritan (St. Luke, x. 25-37). The Jew who was wounded was of a different and hostile nation, and the Samaritan only came across him by accident. Yet this was enough to make them 'neighbours' to each other

self, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me: To love, honour, and succour my father and mother: To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him: To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters: To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters: To hurt no body by word nor deed: To be true and just in all my dealing:

to love him as much as I love myself, and to do to everybody as I should like them to do to me if I were in their position:

(V.)<sup>1</sup> To love, and be respectful to my father and mother, and to help them when they need it: to honour and obey the King and all who govern by his authority: to be obedient to all my masters and tutors and those who teach me about religion: to be respectful and courteous to those older than myself or to respect whom is part of the conduct of a gentleman:

(VI.) To hurt no body by word or deed, and to keep no spite or hatred in my heart:

<sup>1</sup> The Roman figures refer to the Commandments which are explained by the following sentence. The later part of the Duty to your Neighbour needs little explanation when one has arranged it in the order of the Commandments.

To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart: To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering: To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity: Not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God<sup>1</sup> to call me.

(VII.) To keep my body under control ('temperance'); to be moderate as regards my desires for things to eat and drink ('soberness'); and to be pure ('chastity'):

(VIII.) To avoid stealing, even taking bits of things ('picking'), and altogether to be honest and straight in all that I do:

(IX.) To keep my tongue from speaking evil of others, and slandering them, and from lying in general:

(X.) Not to desire what belongs to some one else, but instead of that to be contented—to work now at learning in order to be able to get my own living and be independent, and afterwards to work to earn my

<sup>1</sup> 'Shall please,' not '*has* pleased,' as it is sometimes quoted, just as if being content meant that one must not try by proper means to improve oneself or one's position.

living, and at all times to try my best to do my duty in the position that I am in now, or that I may be in afterwards.

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Now this is all much higher and better than the literal meaning of the Ten Commandments, and yet it is plainly connected with them. How has this change come about?

Whatever other prophets (besides the last of them, John the Baptist) had done to 'prepare the way of the Lord,'<sup>1</sup> still this raising and enlarging the standard and principles of duty was mainly owing to our Lord's teaching. In His preaching of the New Law on a mountain in Galilee (as the Old Law was given on a mountain in Arabia) He took the Commandment 'Thou shalt not kill,' and applied it to contemptuous and insulting words.<sup>2</sup> He took the Commandment 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' and said that if a person deliberately excited his own passions and wished to gratify them, he was guilty, even if fear or circumstances

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, iii. 3; Isaiah, xl. 3.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, v. 21, 22.

prevented him from doing so.<sup>1</sup> He took the Commandment against false swearing (see p. 86), and taught that, as Christians were always in God's presence, they should speak accordingly ; that a Christian's word should be as good as his oath, and that appealing in conversation to anything sacred (as if under ordinary circumstances there were no harm in telling a lie) was dangerous and bad.<sup>2</sup> Thus He made the Commandments apply to words, and thoughts or intentions, and, what is more, made them reasonable, carried them back to the reasons or principles which lay at the root of them.

For, though it needed our Lord to teach men this, yet if we look at the question now, we can see that His view is the only reasonable one. The Commandments are not like so many pitfalls dug about us on no principle, which we can avoid without any great trouble by getting round them. If God forbids murder, the reason is that He hates all brutality, and that murder is the worst form of this. If God forbids theft, it is because He hates all cheating and over-reaching one's fellow-men. And plainly a person who wishes to do something wicked is hardly less

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, v. 27, 28, 'to lust' = in order to lust.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, v. 33-37. Our Lord quotes Levit. xix. 12, which obviously refers to the Third Commandment.

guilty if he is merely unable to carry out his desires. And a person who would take advantage of some wickedness (which he must know God hates) not being expressly mentioned in the Ten Commandments or by our Lord is like a child who, when he has been told, for instance, not to strum on the piano because some one is ill or tired, goes and slams doors or blows a whistle, and then says "You never told me not to." Such a way of looking at things is not only quibbling, but specially miserable and low in those who ought to try all they possibly can to do what our Lord wishes, and who will never do half enough.

Well then, taking the Commandments in this sense, what is often called the 'spirit of them' as opposed to the 'letter,' as our Lord has shown us the way, and as the Catechism explains them, let us go over them a little more in detail, and see what they come to.

I. It seems at first sight as if none of us were in danger of breaking this Commandment. We are not going to worship Baal, or Athene, or Jupiter, or Woden.

But what is meant by having any God for our God? Any nation would consider that they must obey their God;—that if he gave them a command, by a vision, or by an oracle, or by

augury, it must override all other considerations, and they must carry it out. Look at the way in which the Greeks acted on the orders of the oracle at Delphi,<sup>1</sup> and the Romans built temples and celebrated sacrifices and were guided in their campaigns and elections by the birds and beasts' livers and other signs of the divine will, as they thought.<sup>2</sup>

Now supposing a boy takes part in risky conversation, as if he liked it, because he might be laughed at as being too particular if he did not, or supposing he goes about with some one whose society he knows to be bad for him, without any serious purpose or prospect of improving him, because he is good at games and popular, and his friendship gives 'social position';—which is his God, our Lord, whose soldier he professes to be, or 'the world'?

And if a boy, because he cannot do without a lot of nice things to eat, is constantly pressing his parents for money, perhaps on false pretences;—which is his God, our Lord who said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself,"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For instance, Herodotus, i. 174, §§ 3-7; v. 63, §§ 1, 2. In both cases it was contrary to their apparent interests.

<sup>2</sup> There are constant instances in Livy.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew, xvi. 24; see p. 31, etc.

and told us to speak at all times as if we were on oath, or 'the flesh'?

And supposing anyone tempts another to do wrong, either from carelessness, or, what is much worse, deliberately, which is his God, Jesus Christ who said that it would have been better for him to be drowned first (see p. 37), or the devil who is always tempting people? Which does he follow and obey?

It is very easy to break the First Commandment, and the Duty to God shows us how to keep it.

II. Besides the permanent forbidding of idolatry, of which we ourselves may perhaps not be in danger, we saw the principle that underlies this Commandment;—we must not represent God as something different from what He is and so degrade our notion of Him. People have sometimes represented God as content and even pleased that the great mass of the human race should be punished in Hell, and that one is saved by a piece of favouritism on God's part. And yet "God is Love,"<sup>1</sup> and He "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that *whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have ever-*

<sup>1</sup> I John, iv. 16.

lasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."<sup>1</sup> Again, many people, perhaps most people at some time or other in their lives, when they are in great trouble or in a difficult position, think that God is hard upon them, though "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."<sup>2</sup> Then too people are very apt to think that God is pleased with shams and cannot see through them, that He is pleased when they go to Church (in places where they are known) merely for respectability's sake; that if they get round one of His Commandments, and cheat instead of stealing, He cannot see through it. This is like representing God as a calf, or, as is said in Deuteronomy,<sup>3</sup> in 'the likeness of something that creepeth on the ground.' Such people do not use their minds in loving God, and so are not likely to love Him with their heart.

III. The Third Commandment, as we have seen, has two sides; it forbids irreverence, and it forbids lying. If God's name is holy because it is His, everything connected with Him must be holy. Do people never joke about things in the

<sup>1</sup> St. John, iii. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Romans, viii. 28.

<sup>3</sup> iv. 18

Gospels? The Gospels are nothing but God's words and accounts of what He did on earth. They are quite as holy as any name for God that the Jews had.

About lying and shuffling we have said nearly enough (pp. 29, 86, 95). There are very few people in the world who speak as truly as if they were on oath. If anyone does so, it is noticed as exceptional, and 'his light shines before men' as an example,<sup>1</sup> according to his Master's orders.

IV. What is the principle of this Commandment? It is that men should rest from ordinary work one day a week for their general health and well-being, and in order that they may have some time quite free 'to worship God, to give him thanks, and to call upon him.' Now as to the letter of the Commandment,—that one must keep the seventh day of the week, which is Saturday—that is gone, by the general consent of Christians.<sup>2</sup> We keep the first day instead. Why do we do this? It is of course because our Lord rose from the dead on that day; it is a minor Easter Day every week.<sup>3</sup> And it was reasonable

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, v. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Colossians, ii. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Sunday was of course kept from the very first, though the Jewish Christians still kept the Sabbath as well (Acts, xx. 7; Revelation, i. 10). It would be kept by an un-

to change the day. For the seventh day was kept in memory of the creation being finished, and our Lord's resurrection marks our redemption, Christ's work on earth, as being completed, and it points Him out as God ; if He had not died for us, and left us an example, and sent His Spirit to help us, our creation would be a doubtful benefit. Therefore, just as certain days are kept in memory of the Blessed Virgin, and St. Peter, and St. Paul, and other ' saints,' or pattern Christians, so Sunday is ' the Lord's Day ' kept in every week. This gives the principle for keeping it rightly. It is our Lord's day ; what would He wish to have done with it ? It ought to be a cheerful day—it is not Friday, with its memories of His sufferings, but the day on which those were all over, when the fight was won, and He rose in triumph. And yet we can hardly think of His resurrection without remembering His death, and we ought to give some time and attention, in Church and otherwise, to what He then did for us at such a cost. As to details, if we remember the principle and use our minds (given us for the purpose) in working it out, we shall probably not find much difficulty. And the Fifth Commandment comes

broken tradition if the New Testament had never been written, and is a mark or monument of the fact of the Resurrection

next, and we may anticipate it by saying that, if one's parents have opinions about Sunday and wishes as to how we should use it, it is right that we should 'honour' them by showing respect for their opinion. Finally, there are some things which are certainly inappropriate and wrong on Sunday. We have no right to amuse ourselves so as to cause unnecessary trouble and work to servants and others who have as much right to the day's rest as ourselves. It is poor to fritter it away in ordinary work or scraps of work, which we could do just as well some other time. And it is sacrilege to spend any part of our Lord's day in getting into mischief, or in low talk or uncharitable gossip, using the rest which Christ gives us as an opportunity for breaking other Commandments. We are responsible for making a good use of Sunday. As St. Peter says, we are free, but are to use our liberty as the servants of God.<sup>1</sup>

V. Why does the Catechism put the duty of obedience to the King, and to lawful authority in general, under this Commandment? It is because, at the time when the Ten Commandments were given, the authority of parents was

<sup>1</sup> 1 Peter, ii. 16.

practically the only government,<sup>1</sup> and so the duty of obedience to them implies the duty of obedience to all lawful authority. And this certainly secures the blessing promised. No nation that is not in the main law-abiding can possibly prosper. This is one of God's laws (working automatically, one might say) for the moral government of mankind. As to the obedience to 'governors, teachers,' and so on, one might very well explain that in the same way, but it also comes quite directly from the literal meaning of the Fifth Commandment. For how does it come about that your masters have anything to do with you? Plainly because your parents put you under their charge, and wish you to obey them. Obeying them therefore and trying to please them *is* obeying your parents.

Now let us look at the direct relations between a boy and his parents. All boys do not even show respect to their parents. They sometimes treat them as equals or inferiors, as convenient means

<sup>1</sup> The authority of Moses and Joshua was only temporary for a particular purpose, the conquest of the Promised Land. After them for a long time there was, except in times of oppression by foreigners (when the like necessity arose again), little or no government except by the heads of families, which seems to have been the condition of all peoples in very early times (Judges, xvii. 6, etc.).

of supplying them with money and amusement, but as being rather in the way when they want their son to do things which he does not like—for his good, they know more than he does, they have lived in the world rather longer. But besides this outward respect, how can anyone show that he honours another more than by deferring to his opinion, and trying to do what he wishes? Every boy knows what his parents want him to do. They want him to work, as is his duty, and to keep out of mischief. They want him to be a Christian and a gentleman (which naturally go together) and to do them credit,—another way of ‘honouring’ them. With most parents the way in which their children turn out is the main cause of their happiness or the reverse. And when a boy is persistently idle, or behaves unlike a gentleman, still more when he gets into serious trouble, it is very hard on them. They have done their very best for him, and it all seems of no use. If anyone does wrong, it is quite impossible for him to tell that it will not be found out, and if it is, and he gets into serious trouble, whatever may be done to him, his parents get the biggest share of the misery—they are more capable of lasting feeling, and it is such an utter disappointment to them. If a boy had no other motives, ordinary gratitude and proper feeling to

his parents ought to be enough to keep him straight. And there are smaller ways in which he can 'love and honour' them, such as by writing to them often while he is away—proper letters, which tell them something about himself—as well as by his conduct when he is at home.

VI. "To hurt nobody by word nor deed," and "to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart"—for malice is the main cause of unkind and cruel acts and words, though they are also often due to want of imagination and to thoughtlessness, for which we are equally responsible, as we have had brains given us so as to be able to judge of the natural effect of our words and actions. Everyone, though some more than others, can be hurt and made unhappy by unkind and especially by contemptuous words.<sup>1</sup> And plainly there would be no bullying at schools if this Commandment were kept. Yet one does sometimes hear of so-and-so having 'a bad time' at school, which is not creditable to the Christianity of his School or his House. For it is not enough to take no part ourselves if we do nothing to stop it; we are responsible for the result, if 'we leave undone those things which we ought to have done.'

<sup>1</sup> The English equivalents of 'Raca' (St. Matthew, v. 22; see p. 94).

There is hardly anything that is so essential a part of Christianity as kindness to each other—not only to our friends, to those who suit us, or are popular. We have seen what St. Paul said about 'charity' (pp. 7, 8). And it is a part of our Lord's dying commands to us at or after the Last Supper; "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand we must not distort this Commandment so as to make it an excuse for shirking strong words and strong measures, if necessary, in order to stop what is bad. It is very easy to be weakly kind to one at the expense of unkindness and injury to many. And even if it is merely a question of keeping order, those who are responsible for this have to do their duty. Christianity is anything but a weak milk-and-water religion, as the character of its Founder sufficiently shows.

Finally, it is possible to hurt, ruin, and murder other people's characters and souls. This is of course infinitely worse even than injury to their bodies and feelings.

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xiii. 34, 35.

VII. We have said nearly enough about the duty of Christians, one early name for whom was 'saints' or 'holy people,' and who belong to the *Holy Catholic Church*, to be clean in their minds and words and acts (pp. 35-40). It is not hard to see one's duty in this respect, but, like everything else that is worth doing, it takes care and effort. And the Commandments overlap each other;—anyone who loses control over himself in this respect is pretty sure to do something to spoil and murder some one else's character or soul, that is, doing the devil's work for him.

VIII. Stealing is unfortunately not unheard of among those who profess to be gentlemen. Such things as books and umbrellas are not excepted from the Commandment, and yet these are often 'borrowed' without the consent of the owner and at times when he is likely to want them, and no effort is made to return them, without delay, at all events. This is at any rate a modified or temporary theft, and sometimes such things never get returned. It is also very possible to steal marks by 'cribbing.' If anyone gets marks which do not properly belong to him, it comes to exactly the same thing as taking them away from those who have a right to them. This is obvious; there is no

need to argue it. People also sometimes borrow money when they see no clear prospect of paying it, and do not trouble themselves much about this. Some too, when they have borrowed and are able to pay, are in no hurry to do so, and such debts are sometimes never paid, because the person who lent the money does not care to be constantly asking for it, and prefers to be defrauded. We ought to avoid being in debt, both in itself and for its consequences. It makes one dependent on somebody else; it leads to demands upon one's parents, sometimes on false pretences; and, whether at school or afterwards, the loss of self-respect and the deceit that debt involves do more than almost anything else to lower a person's character. This is so important that St. Paul said, "Owe no man *anything* but to love one another"<sup>1</sup>—an obligation which one who cares at all for what our Lord says cannot possibly avoid, but which certainly does not lower his self-respect. We have got to be 'true and just,' honest and straight, in all that we do, and we must take the obvious, reasonable way to be so. And it is much easier to avoid debt and dishonesty if one has learnt to do without things that we like, if necessary.

<sup>1</sup> Romans. xiii. 8.

IX. There is probably no Commandment which is more constantly broken than this by many respectable people who think they are good Christians. One knows how much gossip goes on in the world, and that the bulk of this is running people down, often contrary to the facts. And at school, what do people talk most about in an ordinary way, next to games? Probably about other boys and masters. Is this mostly in their favour? Certainly not; to run people down gives so much more opportunity for saying smart and spicy things; and in lowering others we seem to raise ourselves by comparison with them. Well then, how much of this unkind gossip is true? Possibly half—that is a fairly liberal allowance—and the remainder is ‘evil-speaking, lying, and slandering.’ If we speak in this way of our friends (as some people do), this is treacherous as well. A very common and bad form of slander is to impute bad motives to acts good in themselves, to say that so-and-so is trying to get into favour with somebody else, or whatever it may be. Now it is very hard to decide what our own real motives are, especially as we constantly act from two or more at once, and it is only very occasionally that we can tell the motives of some one else. The only way is to judge of his acts (“by their

fruits ye shall know them" <sup>1</sup>), and even then we are bound to judge as we should think it fair and should like to be judged ourselves, that is, taking circumstances into consideration, justly and charitably. But as a rule we are not called upon to judge other people at all. We may have to for practical purposes—for instance, to decide whether they are people that suit us to make friends of; this we cannot avoid.<sup>2</sup> And sometimes it is one's duty to express one's opinion of an act, or even of a person, in plain terms, calling a spade a spade (if we know that it is one)—'not to be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified' by calling what is low, low, and what is blackguard, blackguard. But this is a very different thing from malicious slandering of people whom one does not like, or thoughtlessly running down some one's character for the sake of conversation, which need not consist of comments on other people.

X. This Commandment not only forbids at the outset the desire to get hold of what belongs to some one else, but it teaches contentment. Wanting to be in some different position from what one can be in is quite useless and foolish;

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, vii. 20

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, vii. 1-5.

it merely stops you from making the best of things (which are as a rule very tolerable); it takes up your attention and prevents you from doing your present duty, which may very likely of itself bring you into a more desirable position, as often happens in a business or profession. It also distracts you from thinking what opportunities you have at present of helping others and being kind to them.

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O Lord, we beseech thee mercifully to receive the prayers of thy people which call upon thee; and grant that they may both perceive and know what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Collect for the First Sunday after the Epiphany.

## V

## WHAT A CHRISTIAN LIFE IS LIKE

THUS it is not very difficult to see in general what sort of things one ought, as a Christian, to do, or avoid. The kind of right conduct which we have spoken of above would be natural in any one who loved God with all his heart and his neighbour as himself.<sup>1</sup> And arranging these duties under the Commandments to which they belong has this advantage, that it enables us to take stock of ourselves periodically (what is called 'self-examination'), to see where our faults lie; and then we can set about correcting them. Not that we are going to be perfect all at once, but if we do not try hard we shall not improve at all. And it is easier to make solid and permanent improvement, because by trying one forms habits. If, for instance, some one who is uncharitable in what he says about others

<sup>1</sup> Romans, viii. 3, 4; xiii. 8-10.

frequently stops himself when a smart remark of this kind occurs to him, he gets a habit of not saying spiteful things ; this becomes easy to him, and he is sure to get a more or less charitable way of judging people in his thoughts as well. In this kind of way it becomes easier for one to do right, and one ought to be constantly improving, by the help of the Holy Spirit, thinking, saying, and doing fewer and fewer things that are wrong, becoming more and more kind and useful to others, "that we may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."<sup>1</sup>

And now will these good actions give us a *claim* to God's favour on earth and to heaven afterwards? However much we improve, we shall not become perfect (though this is the thing to aim at). Anyone who thinks he is as good as he ought to be merely shows what a miserably low standard he has got, and in fact the better people get, the more they see their imperfections. Even if we did become perfect, this would not clear us of what we have done wrong before. A man does not pay off what he owes merely by not running further into debt. And here 'justification by faith,' of which we

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians, iv. 15.

hear in the Bible,<sup>1</sup> comes in. If anyone believes in and trusts our Lord who has redeemed us, showing by his life that he does so, that is all that one has to trust in, and it is quite enough too. If anyone does not try to shape his life by what our Lord has done for us, he cannot be said really to believe in it or Him at all. If we do try, then we are 'Christ's faithful soldiers,' and he will own us and answer for us in this life and afterwards. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God." There is the opposite state of things too, which we need not dwell on.<sup>2</sup> And really this is a much higher position for us than if Christianity meant merely earning heaven by good acts, as the Jews mostly tried to do.<sup>3</sup> For there is always something rather low and slavish in doing right merely for what you can get by it. But the position is really this. We have had things done for us which we can never repay. And we are going to do all we can to show our

<sup>1</sup> For instance, Romans, iv. 20-25; v. 1; Galatians iii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke, xii. 8, 9.

<sup>3</sup> St. Luke, xvii. 7-10, shows how we ought to regard our own good acts. St. Matthew, xxv. 31-40, shows how Christ will look at them, as marks of love to Him.

gratitude. The reward (out of all proportion) will come of itself, and we need not trouble ourselves about that at present.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen how we are to show this gratitude, what it is that our Lord wishes us to do, and in fact to *be*. But we can get at it from another side as well. One thing for which He came into the world was to give us an example of the way a man should live and what his character should be.<sup>2</sup> Now our Lord's commandments and His life come to the same thing, for He was perfectly consistent; what He told others to do He did Himself. But in some ways the character and example of some one who is very good seems to appeal to one still more than what he tells us to do; we can see the beauty of it as a whole.

Now we can find out Jesus Christ's character as a man from His words and acts. In the Gospels we have a consistent picture of Him given by four different people. It is worth studying; it shows a perfect character; and this is one main reason why we should read, and listen to, and try to understand the Gospels, for we shall

<sup>1</sup> The position is clear from what St. Paul says: Romans, xii. 1, and viii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, xvi. 24; xx. 25-28; St. John, xiii. 15.  
1 Peter, ii. 21.

always have something more to learn about Him. But it may be as well to look at the main features of it ; it is easier, if we understand them, to fill in the details from time to time. And we will look at His character as a man (which He really was, as well as God)—as a man living in the world like us, because this is what we are to try to imitate.

No doubt the first point that strikes one, what nobody can altogether miss, is His kindness and absolute unselfishness ; ‘He went about doing good’<sup>1</sup> is a short description of His life. And He took trouble about it,—He ‘had not where to lay His head,’<sup>2</sup> and when he wanted to have some rest for thought and prayer, or to teach His Apostles, and people came and disturbed Him, instead of being vexed and sending them away He taught them and healed them, which was what they wanted.<sup>3</sup> He never did a miracle merely for His own benefit (He refused once for all when the devil wanted Him to do so), but He did hundreds for other people. What He lived for was to do as much good as possible to His Apostles and to all the people He came across. This is a thing to imitate—at a distance, but as much as ever one can.

<sup>1</sup> Acts, x. 38.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke, ix. 58.

<sup>3</sup> St. Mark, iii. 19-21 ; vi. 30-34 ; St. Matthew, xiv. 13, 14.

Again, some persons, when they do really kind things to others, do it in a way which takes away all the grace of it. They fling their benefits to people like bones to a dog. This was not our Lord's way, for He had infinite sympathy and tact. He comforted the widow of Nain<sup>1</sup>—unnecessarily, one might have thought, when He was just going to raise her son to life and her trouble would be over so soon. It was the same with Martha before He raised Lazarus.<sup>2</sup> He appeared specially to Peter after His resurrection,<sup>3</sup> and afterwards gave him a special charge to feed His lambs and His sheep,<sup>4</sup> in order to set him on his feet again, so to speak,—to give him back his self-respect after his fearful fall. We can try to enter into other people's feelings, to feel sympathy with them and show tact, which are essential qualities of a gentleman.

But there is one act of His, which is perhaps the most wonderful in His life, which many years afterwards still filled St. John with wonder when he wrote of it. When our Lord and His disciples were at supper<sup>5</sup> for the last time, “Jesus, though he knew that the Father had

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke, vii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> St. John, xi. 23-27.

<sup>3</sup> St. Luke, xxiv. 34; I Corinthians, xv. 5.

<sup>4</sup> St. John, xxi. 15-17.

<sup>5</sup> The translation “supper being ended” is incorrect.

given all things into his hands, and that he was come forth from God, and was going to God, he riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments ; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. . . . So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you ? Ye call me Master and Lord : and ye say well ; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet ; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord ; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."<sup>1</sup> They had walked in from Bethany to the Last Supper, and had got their feet hot and dusty, for they only wore sandals. Now it was the custom,<sup>2</sup> and a very pleasant one, to have your feet washed before lying down at table, and this used to be done by a servant. But there was no servant there, and of course none of the Apostles

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xiii. 3-5, 12-17.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke, vii. 44.

would degrade himself in that way. And so they had begun supper without it, when Jesus got up and Himself washed their feet. And He expressly said that it was to be an example to us, and that, if He was not above doing such things, we certainly ought not to be. What did He mean us to do? Now on Maundy Thursday, the anniversary of the day on which this was done, the Pope and the Emperor of Austria wash the feet of twelve poor men. If they do this to remind themselves and others of our Lord's command, this is right enough. But it is hardly what He meant.

Some years ago an English bishop was walking back with his son to the station after preaching in a distant part of his diocese. Both of them were strong men ; they had both rowed in the Cambridge Eight. As they passed a cottage they saw a poor woman standing at her door in great perplexity. A load of coals from a neighbouring colliery had been delivered at her door—shot down on the ground—and she was much too feeble to get them into the shed. So the bishop and his son borrowed a couple of shovels, took off their coats, and got all the coals into the shed, and then went on to the station. Very undignified, no doubt. A bishop, 'the world' would say, has a position to keep up,

and he should have given the woman a couple of shillings to get some one to help her. But our Lord did not look at things in this way, and some of His followers do not either. 'Washing the disciples' feet' practically means doing kind things to others, even if they seem beneath one's dignity.

Some people, who can feel much for others, are timid and weak. Now courage, that is to say, readiness to meet danger, and power to face and to bear pain and hardship, is certainly a virtue and a very important one, admirable in itself, and necessary if we are not to be stopped from doing a great many things that we are bound to do, or that are worth doing. And no one was ever braver than our Lord. For instance, when He was starting off to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem to raise His friend Lazarus, the Apostles wanted to stop Him. It was too dangerous. "Master," they said, "the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?"<sup>1</sup> And Thomas thought that they would all be killed together.<sup>2</sup> But our Lord went all the same to help His friend. And a few weeks later He went up to the Passover for the last time, to perform the ordinary religious duties of

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xi. 8

<sup>2</sup> St. John, xi. 16.

a Jew, knowing very well what would happen to Him if He went. And He was just as brave in bearing it when it came. Courage does not consist in being callous and insensible to pain and insult. We see from the Agony in the Garden something of what it was that He had to bear, and how He could feel it. And yet, while He was being tried for His life, with all that brutal unfairness, with mockery and scourging in the intervals, He was perfectly dignified.<sup>1</sup> He never said anything that He might not have said if He had been free and out of danger. And it was just the same on the cross. He cared for the thief.<sup>2</sup> He cared for His Mother.<sup>3</sup> He cared for everyone but Himself—He would not have the wine and myrrh to deaden the pain,<sup>4</sup> because it would cloud His mind, and the thief at all events had cause to be thankful that He had not drunk it. It is from this part of His character that one can see how men like Havelock, and Henry Lawrence, and General Gordon, whose courage was so splendid, were brave, not in spite of being Christians, but because they were Christians,—followers and imitators of Jesus Christ.

Then there is another kind of courage called

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, St. John, xviii. 23, 33-38.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke, xxiii. 39-43.

<sup>3</sup> St. John, xix. 25-27.

<sup>4</sup> St. Mark, xv. 23.

moral courage. The two kinds do not always go together, but there is no need to discuss which is the finest—we should try to practise both. What we mean by moral courage is being able to stand up for what we know is right, and stick to it, even if everyone is against us. Our Lord was a perfect example in this way too. He really stood absolutely alone; for the disciples, as we have seen, had only a very dim and imperfect idea of what He was, and what He was trying to do. There was the opposition of the Pharisees, for instance. We are very apt to think of this merely with contempt—they were silly people, who were always refuted and silenced when they attacked our Lord. No doubt they were, but that was not the way in which the Jews thought of them. And it was not the way in which the Apostles thought of them either. “Knowest thou,” they said, “that the Pharisees were offended (or shocked) after they heard this saying?”<sup>1</sup> Apparently they thought that He would withdraw what He had said, or explain it away. Since the chief Priests were against Him too as soon as He came in contact with them, it was like standing up against all the Professors of Theology and Arch-

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xv. 12.

bishops and Bishops. And the Pharisees got almost all the people too to give Him up. We may have, like Christ, to stand up against public opinion and speak out for what we know to be right, 'not to be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.' But the penalty is rather different. All that can happen to you is perhaps to be laughed at, and become less popular. In His case the punishment was all sorts of hindrances put in the way of His work, shocking and brutal slander (they said that He cured people by being in league with the devil!<sup>1</sup>), and the certainty of a horrible death. We have not anything like that to face.

And then there was His patriotism. No one was ever worse treated by His country. He had come upon earth to be the Messiah promised to His nation, whom they professed to be looking for. They would not have Him, because He did not square with the foolish notions that they had formed of what the Messiah was to be ; they rejected and killed Him. "He came unto his own, and his own people received him not."<sup>2</sup> And yet what He felt most was their inevitable punishment for this, the throwing away of their last chance. "And when he was come near, he

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xii. 22-24.

<sup>2</sup> St. John, i. 11.

beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."<sup>1</sup> We can follow Jesus Christ in caring for our House and School and for our Country, and in trying hard to do our very best for them.

This is of course a mere sketch. One can go on all one's life learning more of what our Lord's character was like, and trying to follow it more completely and more intelligently. His life is the one perfect example of what a man should try to be. And it *is* possible to imitate Him. In the good Christians that one knows or has known, or about whom one reads—in a man like Gordon for instance—one can see the copy or reflection of Christ's character. It is like the blaze that one sometimes sees in the distance when the sun shines on glass. It is not the sun,

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke, xix. 41-44; see too St. Matthew, xxiii. 37.

but it is very bright for all that, and we can see at once what its source is. Now we sometimes hear of 'Christian virtues,' as if some virtues were Christian and some were not. St. Paul thought otherwise: "Finally, brethren," he says, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."<sup>1</sup> This is comprehensive enough for anyone. The fact is that all virtues are Christian. Our Lord told us to be 'perfect, even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect.'<sup>2</sup> And He showed us in His own life what He meant.

And now, if you try to keep your promise, to be servants of Jesus Christ by doing what He wishes and following His example, to be His soldiers by carrying on His work—fighting against all that is bad and low, and helping on all that is good and noble—what sort of life are you going to have? It is often said that life is very flat without an object. Every 'faithful soldier and servant of Christ' has an object, the finest and highest that anyone can have,—to carry on the work and the fight that our Lord

<sup>1</sup> Philippians, iv. 8.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, v. 48.

began. And anybody can make a start at once. We have all got plenty of things to improve and correct in ourselves; and as for doing good to others, there is no place where anyone who tries can do more good than at school, by his example and by taking the right side. If everyone who is confirmed kept his word—his oath of allegiance—like a gentleman, schools would be very good places indeed. And if we learn to live like this at school we shall do it almost naturally in the world afterwards, whatever position we are in.

But is it a happy life? That you have got to try for yourselves, but most people's experience would be that people who are really Christians are happier than others. Certainly they ought to be, for, though they have troubles, and very crushing ones too sometimes, yet what they are told on good authority is that no real harm can happen to them,—that their troubles are really for their good only. Sometimes people can partly see this afterwards; they can understand, for instance, that something they very much wanted would not have been at all good for them, or, if they do not see it in this life, they must take it on trust, like children, believing that their Father can arrange for their lives much better than they could do it for themselves. This is what St. Paul says about it: “And we know that all

things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. . . . What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?—as it is written, 'For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.' Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."<sup>1</sup>

But, in order to have Christ's love and His

<sup>1</sup> Romans, viii. 28, 31-39. As to the meaning of "called according to his purpose" and "God's elect," see note, pp. 46, 47, and pp. 98, 99.

care, we have got to be real followers or imitators of Him, and not sham ones. This, like everything worth doing, needs effort on our part ; it also requires all the help we can possibly get, which will be spoken of in the next two chapters.

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Almighty God, who hast given thine only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin, and also an ensample of godly life ; Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life ; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

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The doctrine of 'Justification by Faith' as explained above (pp. 113-115) was not discovered at the Reformation ; there is no difference between the view of Toplady in the eighteenth century, and that of Bernard, the monk of the twelfth century :

" Not the labours of my hands  
Can fulfil Thy law's demands ;  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears for ever flow,  
All for sin could not atone ;  
Thou must save and Thou alone. "

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<sup>1</sup> Collect for the Second Sunday after Easter.

“Nec meritis peto, nam meritis meto morte perire ;  
 Nec reticens tego quod meritis ego filius iræ.  
 Vita quidem mea, vita nimis rea, mortua vita,  
 Quippe reatibus exitialibus obruta, trita.  
 Spe tamen ambulo, præmia postulo speque fideque,  
 Illa perennia postulo præmia nocte dieque ;  
 Me Pater optimus atque piissimus ille creavit,  
 In lue pertulit, ex lue sustulit, a lue lavit.”

And again :

“ Diluit omnia cælica gratia, fons David undans,  
 Omnia diluit, omnibus affluit, omnia mundans.”

[“Nor do I ask it for my deserts, for by my deserts I reap to die the death ; nor do I cloke or conceal that by my deserts I am a child of wrath. My life indeed, a life too guilty, a dead life, is overwhelmed and crushed with deadly faults. Yet I walk in hope, I beg for the rewards in hope and trust, those everlasting rewards I beg for night and day. Me the great Father, best and kindest, created, endured me in my guilt, raised me out of my guilt, washed me from my guilt.”]

And :

“Heavenly kindness, the spring of David welling up, washes away all, it washes away all, it flows to all, cleansing all things.”]



HELP TO DO RIGHT



## VI

### HELP TO DO RIGHT

#### i. *Prayer.*

*Catechist.* My good<sup>1</sup> Child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the Commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace;<sup>2</sup> which thou must learn<sup>3</sup> at all times<sup>4</sup> to call for by diligent<sup>5</sup> prayer. Let me hear therefore, if thou canst say the Lord's Prayer.

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#### *Question.*

What desirest thou of God  
in this prayer?

<sup>1</sup> Merely a pleasant way of speaking,—like 'Good people.'

<sup>2</sup> God's kind help, given on the occasions when we specially need it and ask for it, as distinguished from the help given us once for all in Baptism and Confirmation.

<sup>3</sup> That is, acquire the habit of asking for it.

<sup>4</sup> Whenever we need it; see above, note 2.

<sup>5</sup> Earnest and repeated prayer.

*Answer.*

Our Father, which art in heaven,

Hallowed be Thy name,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

I desire my Lord God, our heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness,<sup>1</sup> to send his grace<sup>2</sup> unto me and to all people ;<sup>3</sup>

that we may worship him

serve him,

and obey him,

as we ought to do.<sup>4</sup>

And I pray unto God that he will send us all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies ;

<sup>1</sup> This is implied in God's being our *Father*, that He will give us all that is good for us, especially what will make us better. See St. Matthew, vii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> That is, His kind help.

<sup>3</sup> This is implied in 'Our Father,' 'Give us,' etc. ; we are to pray for all men as well as ourselves.

<sup>4</sup> The Catechism is quite right in attaching the words 'in earth as it is in heaven' to all three sentences before. In heaven God is honoured perfectly, He rules there without a rival, and He is obeyed absolutely. And this is what we ought to aim at on earth.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation ;

But deliver us from evil.<sup>2</sup>

and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins ;

and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers ghostly<sup>1</sup> and bodily ;

and that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death.<sup>3</sup> And this I

<sup>1</sup> That is, to our souls, what we ordinarily call ‘temptation.’ But the word also applies to severe bodily ‘trials,’ such as blindness, or paralysis. Therefore we are asking to be defended in ‘bodily’ dangers as well.

<sup>2</sup> Probably ‘the evil one.’ But as the devil has a hand in all wickedness, and aims at our everlasting ruin, the explanation in the Catechism is practically quite right.

<sup>3</sup> See 2 Thessalonians, i. 9. The ending often used, “For thine is the kingdom,” etc., though very old, and beautiful and appropriate enough, is not a part of the Lord’s Prayer, any more than the “Glory be to the Father,” etc., is a part of a Psalm, or of the Magnificat, as said by the Blessed Virgin. It was used in the service very early, and got written into copies of St. Matthew’s Gospel by some one writing this out, to whom the ending was familiar.

Amen.

trust he will do of his mercy and goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> And therefore I say Amen, So be it.

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The connection between prayer and a Christian life is brought out clearly in the Catechism. We certainly cannot do right without God's help. And it is not enough to have been helped once for all, so to speak, in Baptism and in Confirmation. We want 'special grace'—constant help to do right. And so our Lord not only set us the example of praying,<sup>2</sup> and told us to pray, but also gave His disciples a prayer which includes the things which we need to pray for and which we ought to wish for. So it is at once the best prayer possible, and a model for our other prayers. For both reasons, it is most important that we should understand it. We are constantly using it, and it is not much use to say a prayer if we do not attach any definite meaning to what we say. And so we will go through it rather more in detail than the explanation in the Catechism.

<sup>1</sup> This is implied in our using His prayer.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, St. Luke, vi. 12.

## OUR FATHER.

This strikes the keynote of the whole prayer. Our Father wishes to give us what we need for ourselves and others, but, as parents often do, He tells us to ask Him for it.<sup>1</sup> But we do not say '*My Father*'; He is the Father of all, but specially of those who in Baptism are made 'children of God' (p. 22). And as the last thing that a Christian ought to be is to be selfish, it would be a strange thing if he began by being so in his prayers. We are not the only children, and we ought to pray for 'the whole family.'<sup>2</sup>

## WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.

This reminds us that the family to which we belong, though many of the children are living in this world, has its centre and home in heaven, where our Father is, and that we have to live accordingly,—to be (in our humble way) 'a credit to the family'; to rise to our real position; to try to bring higher ideas and a higher standard into the world around us by thinking, speaking, and acting as our Father's children should do.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, vii. 7-11.      <sup>2</sup> Ephesians, iii. 14, 15.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew, v. 16, 48.

## HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

'Hallowed' of course means reverenced and honoured. But what is meant by God's 'Name'? No doubt the prayer reminds us that we should not use God's Name irreverently, and that we wish that others should not do so either. But this is certainly not the whole of the meaning. The name of a person brings into our minds and represents to us all that we know of him. When we speak of 'an honoured name' of a family or a person, it is not that the sounds that make it up are specially worthy of respect, but the acts and character which it represents to us. And so we pray that God, as He really is, that is to say, our Father, infinitely powerful, just, and kind, may be honoured by ourselves and everyone else. How can this best be done? Partly in our worship of Him. People who are in the presence of some great man, whom they respect **or** from whom they want something, generally manage to attend to what they are saying. People in God's presence and asking Him for what they need do not do so always by any means. And there is another way in which God can be honoured. If all who profess to be Christians really tried their very best to do what our Lord tells them—among other things, to

make Christians of those who are not so already, both at home and abroad—there would before very long be exceedingly few people in the world who did not honour God. The sight of a life which is obviously ‘not of the world,’<sup>1</sup> but inspired by higher motives, is a fact before people’s eyes, which teaches those who do not yet believe, and compels them to honour it and its source. “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”<sup>2</sup> So we pray that we and other Christians may be ‘the light of the world,’ as our Lord wished us to be.

### THY KINGDOM COME.

Does this merely mean that we wish the Day of Judgment to come soon, as when in the Burial Service God is prayed ‘shortly to accomplish the number of His elect and to hasten His kingdom’? No doubt this will be a splendid thing when it comes; when, as St. Paul says, all things are put under Christ<sup>3</sup> and under God the Father, and creation itself is delivered from its troubles and from death, and in a way made to share the glory of the children of God,<sup>4</sup> when all

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xvii. 14, 16.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, v. 16.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Corinthians, xv. 24, 25.

<sup>4</sup> Romans, viii. 21, 22.

evil shall be destroyed, along with pain and sorrow. But people who are young and happy can scarcely be expected to wish very much for the end of the world ; and it is hardly right that they should, for they have got their work to do for Christ in the world. But is this all that is meant by 'Thy kingdom come'? It is not even the chief part of its meaning. If all the nations in the world were Christian ; if there were but one Church, or at all events if Christians were to make as little as possible of the differences that divide them, and were all to work together amicably and earnestly to make the world a better place, according to our Lord's wish,<sup>1</sup> should we not say that His kingdom had come to a very great extent, though nature and death went on the same as now? As the hymn says :

"Thy kingdom come, O Lord,  
 Thy rule, O Christ, begin,  
 Break with Thine iron rod<sup>2</sup>  
 The tyrannies of sin.

"Where is Thy reign of peace,  
 And purity, and love?  
 When shall all discord cease,  
 As in the realms above?

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<sup>1</sup> St. John, xvii. 20-23 ; St. Luke, ix. 49, 50

<sup>2</sup> Psalm ii. 9.

“When comes the promised time  
That war shall be no more,  
Oppression, lust, and crime  
Shall flee Thy face before?”

But the kingdom comes gradually, as a rule, like leaven or yeast working in dough, as our Lord says.<sup>1</sup> And so we pray that, whether by some great step in advance (as when England renounced first the slave-trade and then slavery), or by people becoming real Christians, one or two or three at a time, His kingdom may spread and be strengthened, that there may be more subjects, and that those who are subjects and citizens of it already may be more loyal to their King, which is the great strength of a kingdom.

#### THY WILL BE DONE.

This prayer is closely connected with what has gone before. We pray that men, both those who belong to the kingdom and those who are not yet in it, may do what the King wishes them and tells them to do, which is all for the real good of themselves, and each other, and the world in general. And if we pray that the will of God may prevail, we must wish that it should be carried out, even if our own wishes would

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xiii. 33.

naturally be different, as when our Lord in the Garden said, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."<sup>1</sup>

This sentence of the Lord's Prayer is then at once a prayer for active obedience and of submission to God's will.

#### IN EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

This, as has been said, goes with all three clauses that come before it. "Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done—in earth as in heaven," the capital of our Father's kingdom.

#### GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY<sup>2</sup> BREAD.

One need not say much about this beyond the explanation in the Catechism,—'all things

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke, xxii. 42:

"Ill that He blesses is our good,  
And unblessed good is ill,  
And all is right that seems most wrong,  
If it be His sweet will."

FABER.

This, though hard to realize, is common sense to anyone who really believes the Christian faith (see pp. 85, 99, 150, 155, etc.)

<sup>2</sup> The word probably means 'for the day coming,' but this makes little practical difference. St. Luke says 'day by day.'

that be needful both for our souls and bodies.' It is quite right to put the needs of our souls first; this is what our Lord did in His own case at the Temptation, "Man shall not live by bread alone,"<sup>1</sup> and He is our example; it is also what He told us to do, to 'seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things necessary for the body should be added to us.'<sup>2</sup> But we are certainly right to pray too for what our bodies need. Our bodily condition and temporal circumstances do act on our power to do good in the world, though not always in the way that we think they will. And praying for our '*daily bread*' goes with what our Lord says as to our not being anxious about things too far ahead, "for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."<sup>3</sup> He expects us to ask Him, though He is arranging for us all the time, as fathers do for their children.

#### AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES.

What do 'debts,' 'trespasses,' and 'sins' mean, all of which words are used here in different versions of the Lord's Prayer? In the first place we owe to God, the Father, the Son, and the

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, iv. 4.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, vi. 33.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew, vi. 25-34.

Holy Ghost, an enormous debt for benefits and kindnesses done us. This we cannot possibly repay, and we have not even tried as we ought to make any return. By 'leaving undone those things which we ought to have done, and doing what we ought not to do,' we increase our debt to God, and we can only ask Him to forgive it us,—to let us off it.<sup>1</sup> Then as to 'trespasses'<sup>2</sup> (injuries or wrongs done to some one) and 'sins.' 'Sins' may be looked at from several points, but the simplest and the soundest view is that they are acts of gross ingratitude. The Father sent the Son, and the Son came into the world to live for us and to die for us. Our Lord has told us and shown us very plainly what He wishes us to do for Him, and what thoughts and words and acts He wishes us to keep clear of. And yet we do not do what He asks us, and do think and speak and act in ways that He hates. The very best of us want forgiveness every day of our lives. And we ought to try, when we say our prayers at night, to think in what ways we have done wrong, in order both to be sorry intelligently, and to do better in future.

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xviii. 27, 32.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, xviii. 15, shows the meaning of the word.

## AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT TRESPASS AGAINST US.

Here we have to face a difficulty. Everybody meets with it some time or other, and it is best to look it in the face at once. 'What am I to do' (it may be said) 'if some one picks my pocket? Am I to let him off to go and do the same to others? It is my duty to society to prosecute him.' Or, 'So-and-So has slandered me grossly; if I take no notice of it, it will merely make him think that it is a matter of no consequence to tell lies about people, and will encourage him to go and do the same to others.' No doubt there is something in this, but the sound point in the argument is in the words 'to others,' 'to society.' We are many of us too much inclined to forgive readily injuries done to others, and a person might very well refuse to be on speaking terms with a scoundrel, or with one who had done an outrageous injury to a friend of his, and yet say the Lord's Prayer or come to the Holy Communion; though, even in the case of offences against others, we have got to be equitable, to take circumstances into consideration, and to remember that what we ought to aim at is to make the offending person better, and not to 'score off' him, or make him uncom-

fortable—except for his own or the public good. But where the injury is done to ourselves, we have got to be extremely careful how we let ourselves off forgiving our enemy. Besides other considerations, it is very poor and dishonest to say to yourself that you hate some one on public grounds, when it is really a matter of private and personal dislike. We have got to be quite sure that we should judge the wrong as severely if we heard of its being done to some one else. We must get rid of our own personal feelings and resentment in the matter altogether, and forgive the ‘trespass against *us*’ entirely.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See St. Matthew, xviii. 15-17: “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass [against thee], go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that ‘in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church too, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” The exact course of proceeding seems to be impossible as things are now. But at any rate the principle of it is, first, to do one’s very best to get the wrong put right by the wrongdoer willingly, and then, if this fails, to make sure that the real facts are ascertained, and that the matter is judged impartially, as it would be if the whole ‘Church’ (or community of Christians) were consulted. (The words ‘against thee’ were probably not

But really these difficult cases will not often arise. Most things done against us are purely personal ; they do not really affect anyone else, or any principle. And then we *have got* to forgive them.

“ Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him ? till seven times ? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times ; but, Until seventy times seven.<sup>1</sup> Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.<sup>2</sup> But forasmuch as he had not wherewith to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and released him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence :<sup>2</sup>

in the gospel originally. But wrong done to oneself is probably implied, or certainly included.)

<sup>1</sup> Of course means an indefinite number of times.

<sup>2</sup> Ten thousand talents at the present value of silver

and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. Then his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.”<sup>1</sup>

Now in this parable there is no exaggeration. Our debt to God is infinite, we are always running it up, since every wrong that we do, even if it

would be worth a little less than a million sterling; one hundred pence, about £1 8s. Silver money was much more valuable then (it would buy more), but of course the *relative* value is unaltered. The king's debtor in the story would probably be a farmer of taxes.

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xviii. 21-35.

affects one or other of our fellow-men or boys at the same time, is an offence against God as well. Besides, all our offences against Him are acts of ingratitude ; those who injure us, even if they are under obligation to us at all, are not quite under such obligations as we are to God and our Lord. And here again our Lord set us an example ; He died for those who had got Him condemned in the most unscrupulous way, and for those who were torturing and killing Him. We shall never have to forgive the millionth part of what He had.

The duty then is quite clear. But to carry it out is not so easy. How is it to be done ? To begin with, we should make up our minds that we have got to forgive the person, and try hard to do so. Very often we shall be able to manage it, and if we make a habit of forgiving injuries it will come easier and easier.<sup>1</sup> But, if we cannot do it simply by trying, we must set our brains to work,—we must ‘love God with our mind.’ We can think how much less Jesus Christ expects of us than what He did Himself, how much He cares for it, and what reasons we have for trying to please Him. We can also look at the offence afresh from a reasonable and charitable point of view ; very probably we have

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 112, 113.

at some time or other done the same kind of thing to some one else, and we can make the same sort of excuses for our enemy that we should be exceedingly ready to make for ourselves. And, finally, there is one practical means that we can certainly take. If we cannot (or think we cannot) control or alter our feelings, we are certainly masters of our acts and words. We can look out for chances of doing or saying something nice to him, which will probably put things right—including our feelings.

#### LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

We have said already that the word 'temptation' includes severe bodily trials,<sup>1</sup>—being made helpless by illness, even for a time, still more to such troubles as permanent lameness or blindness. But we have already prayed that God's will may be done, and if something of this kind should be His will in our case, we ought to be sure that it is for some adequate good to ourselves and others, just as fathers sometimes have to have their children operated on to secure some permanent good to their bodies. We will say a little more about this presently.

<sup>1</sup> These are also temptations in the ordinary sense, since they always *tempt* people more or less to be discontented with God's arrangements for them.

But as to temptation in the ordinary sense—inducements to do wrong—it is not quite so easy to understand the prayer. Of course God does not tempt us,—that is the work of the devil, who uses various means to do this, especially our own natural desires ('the flesh'), as well as the wrong things we have done before, to give him a handle, and a low public opinion ('the world') to back him. Still God may put us into circumstances in which our faith is tried by doubts, and our conduct by temptations to do wrong, and He not unfrequently does so, just as our Lord was 'led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.'<sup>1</sup> And St. James says, "Blessed is the man that withstands temptation,"<sup>2</sup> for when he has been approved he shall receive the crown of life which God has promised to those that love Him."<sup>3</sup> He has (by God's help) withstood temptation, like the attack of the enemy ; he is all the better soldier for it himself, and he can give advice and help to the raw recruits. And in fact it is to a large extent what soldiers are for, to resist the attacks of the enemy. Why then should we pray not to be tempted? Plainly, be-

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, iv. 1.

<sup>2</sup> It is the word commonly used in Greek for *withstanding* (not *suffering*) an attack of the enemy.

<sup>3</sup> James, i. 12; see also verses 13, 14.

cause we ought not to be too confident in ourselves, we know that we ourselves are rather weak, and we do not wish to be tried too severely. But this is a prayer which God will certainly not always grant according to the letter, 'but will with the temptation also make the way of escape that we may be able to bear it.'<sup>1</sup> This way (which there always is) of defeating the attack sometimes needs thinking, as well as resolution, and we have had brains given us for the purpose.

#### BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

Or, 'from the devil.' That is, 'but in any case, whether we are tempted or not, save us from the enemy of our souls, the sin which he tries to make us do, and the final ruin which comes from it.'

#### AMEN.

Gives our assent to the whole prayer once again, and implies that we do really mean it.

But does everybody who says the Lord's Prayer really mean what he says? It is plain that it requires and points to a special and a high way of looking at things. It has no mean-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians, x. 13.

ing to a person who does not trust God as his Father, or care for His approval ; who lives as if he had no tie to a world where a higher standard is recognized than by the average people around him ; who does not care whether God is honoured in his own worship and in his life ; who does not trouble himself as to whether his example and influence make things around him better ; who does not want to do God's will himself, and is indignant if God's arrangement of things does not exactly suit his views ; who does not care to feed his own soul by reading and trying to understand the Bible and by other means ; who does not trouble himself about his own ingratitude to our Lord, and bears spite against those who injure him ; who puts himself in circumstances of temptation ; and does not mind yielding to the devil, as far as other people do, at all events. The Lord's Prayer teaches us not only what we ought to want, but what sort of people we ought to be, and how we ought to live. For it is absurd to ask some one else for things, if we ourselves make no effort to get them so far as we can.

And now one ought to say something about prayer in general. Prayer is of course asking God, as our Father, for what we want. And here some people find difficulties. They say,

“Nature is governed by fixed laws, and prayer cannot alter these ;” or, “If God’s arrangements for the management of the world are so good, and if his purposes towards us are so kind, why should we ask him for things at all? He will do what is best for the world and for us in any case, and we cannot expect to alter His purposes.” Now these arguments come of our thinking that we know more than we really do. Certain things seem to us always to happen in one way, and to follow each other, and we call them ‘laws of nature,’ but we really know very little about them ; every now and then people have to re-arrange their ideas about them, as they get to know more. And nobody really understands them ;—nobody, for instance, knows *why* a seed grows into a plant, though they know more or less *how*, that is, under what circumstances, and by what stages, it does. And as to the way in which men’s minds work we know still less. Therefore any such arguments start from things which we know very imperfectly, and soon get into a region about which we know hardly anything. On the other hand, we have direct statements about prayer from One who must know. Our Lord not only knew about God the Father and His ways as no one else ever did, but He also knew by experience that His own prayers

as a man had been answered.<sup>1</sup> In fact He knew all about it, and He told His disciples that 'whatever they asked in prayer, believing, they should receive.'<sup>2</sup> The position of those people who think they know so much is rather as if some one who knew a very little about machinery were to go into a factory, where the machinery was very complicated, and a good deal of it was covered up, and were to explain his ideas of the processes of manufacture to the rest of the party, quite disregarding what the chief engineer<sup>3</sup> had to say about it. Which is likely to be right?

Now our Lord's promises about prayer are many and very definite. Besides the one just mentioned, there is, "Ask, and it shall be given you,"<sup>4</sup> with what follows, and "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it."<sup>5</sup> But does this mean that we can, so to speak, order what

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xi. 27; St. John, xi. 41-43.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, xxi. 22.

<sup>3</sup> "His Son . . . through whom also he (God the Father) made the worlds." "Upholding all things by the word of his power." Heb. i. 2, 3. See too St. John, i. 3., and Col. i. 16.

<sup>4</sup> St. Matthew, vii. 7, etc.

<sup>5</sup> St. John, xiv. 14. When a person says to us, "You can use my name," to get admission somewhere, or as an introduction, it means that we shall be treated as the person would be whose name we are using, or at all events as his friend.

we want from God, and that He will always give us exactly what we ask for? Plainly not, for if we were allowed to interfere as we chose with the machinery, whether what we wanted were God's will or not, it would be impossible that 'all things should work together for our good.'<sup>1</sup> Supposing that a father were to tell his small boy that, if he wanted things, he must come and ask for them, and then he would get them. Supposing then that the child were to come and say, "You told me that you would give me what I wanted; I should like always to have dinner late with you and eat what you do, and I want to drive the carriage." Of course his father would refuse. Though the child might very probably not see this at the time, these things would be very bad for him physically and otherwise. Now no doubt a great many things that people want and pray for would be very bad for them, though they do not see it either. And therefore we ought always to pray remembering that "Thy will be done" is a part of our prayers, and leaving it to God to do for us what we need in some other way, if this is better for us:—

"Not what I wish, but what I want,  
O let Thy grace supply;

---

<sup>1</sup> Romans, viii. 28.

The good unasked in mercy grant,  
The ill, though asked, deny."

This is what our Lord did when He prayed, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."<sup>1</sup>

And, as we probably know, God does not always take away even severe troubles from His servants any more than he took away something much worse from His Son. St. Paul had some trouble which was a great burden to him; he calls it his 'thorn in the flesh,' and says that he besought the Lord on three separate occasions to free him from it. No one knows for certain what it was; some think it was extreme weakness of sight, or it may have been bad health.<sup>2</sup> Whatever it was, though it seemed to St. Paul to be a great hindrance to his work, the Lord did not take it away. But did it make any permanent difference to St. Paul? What he cared for was to do as much good as he could—to make as many people as possible real Christians. And this he was helped to do;<sup>3</sup> and the solid

<sup>1</sup> St. Luke, xxii. 42.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Corinthians, xii. 7-9; Galatians, iv. 13-15; Acts, xvii. 15.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Corinthians, xii. 9.

result of his life was that no man could have done more for his Master's religion and for us Christians than he did. It is not only St. Paul who has suffered from a 'thorn in the flesh,'—a great trouble and hindrance, which, so far as his wishes were concerned, he would have given anything to avoid. I knew myself one who as a clergyman was doing an immense amount of good, and who was threatened with blindness. There is no doubt, though he did not talk about it, that he 'besought the Lord thrice,' or oftener, 'that it might depart from him.' It did not ; he became quite blind. But this, so far as could be seen, did not make him at all less happy or cheerful ; and he was quite as ready to make or enjoy a joke as he had been before. With the assistance of people who were delighted to help him he got about his parish, and he preached better than ever. He could not have done better work, if he had had his sight, perhaps not such good work. Then too there is one quality which people can hardly acquire unless they have had trouble themselves, and that is the power of sympathizing with others. We are most of us so wanting in imagination—we find it so hard to put ourselves into the position of another, that a person who has always been well and prosperous can hardly feel real and intelligent sympathy

with people who are ill, or in pain or trouble. And yet this is worth a little pain or sorrow ; it is like Christ to feel for others. But, whether God sends us trouble in order to give us something of this part of His Son's character or for some other reason, we must, as has been said, leave such matters in His hands. It is quite right to pray against them, 'Lead us not into temptation'; but we must leave the final decision to Him.

And if this is so in big troubles, we ought certainly to do the same in the case of small worries and vexations, or in the case of things which we think we should very much like to have. But that is all ; it certainly is not meant that in troubles or wants, small as well as great, we ought not to pray to God about them, and then we shall either get what we wish, or something that is still better for us in the long run. For we have a Friend at court whose name we can use, not one 'who cannot be touched with the feeling of our weaknesses';<sup>1</sup> and a father is infinitely kind and sympathizing if his child cuts his finger, or tumbles down, or is disappointed about a day's pleasure, even if he knows it will be all right again in a very short time, and

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xiv. 14; Hebrews, iv. 14, 15.

knows too that it is good training for anyone to learn to bear pain and disappointment. And of course there are some things about which we know God's will already. It is not a case of 'if' when we want to get strength of mind to resist some temptation, or to speak up for what is right, and to become better than we are by the help of the Holy Spirit.

There are in fact no troubles that are too small, no weakness that is too pitiable, and no sin that is too ugly for us to pray to God about them. Or, if we can do this better, we can pray to Jesus Christ. St. Stephen did this when he was dying,<sup>1</sup> and almost all the Litany is addressed to our Lord. And we know that He can understand all about it from His own experience, and, from His character when He was on earth, that He has infinite sympathy. Our other friends might think us silly, or perhaps look down on us or dislike us if we told them, but there is no chance of that with Him.<sup>2</sup>

And then, as to when we should pray. It is most important that we should say our prayers at regular times, morning and evening, as well as in church or chapel, and really think about

<sup>1</sup> Acts, vii. 59.

<sup>2</sup> St. Mark, ii. 15-17; St. Luke, vii. 36-50; and see pp. 41-43, 117.

and mean what we say, and that we should pray for others as well as for ourselves on these occasions (this is one of the first lessons taught by the Lord's Prayer). And though it is a good thing to have some form and arrangement for our prayers, we should not be tied to this, if we have some want or difficulty which seems to fall outside the form of prayer that we use. But, besides this, if we need to be shown at once what is right to do in a difficult case, or wish to be helped to do right, or 'confess Christ' by our acts, where this is hard and unpleasant, it is not in the least necessary to go into a particular place, or to get into a kneeling position. We can pray quite well shortly in our minds. And if we do not take the means to keep straight (among which prayer is one of the chief), we have no one but ourselves to blame if we go wrong—perhaps break down badly.

And, lastly, if anyone gives us things, it is very poor behaviour not to thank him, whether he is always doing it, almost as a matter of course, or whether we have got something that we have specially wanted or asked for.

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Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and

art wont to give more than either we desire, or deserve; Pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. *Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Collect for the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

## VII

### HELP TO DO RIGHT

#### 2. *The Sacraments.*

##### *Question.*

How many Sacra-  
ments hath Christ  
ordained in his  
Church?

How many Sacraments has  
Christ appointed in his  
Church?<sup>1</sup>

##### *Answer.*

Two only, as gene-  
rally necessary to  
salvation,<sup>2</sup> that is

He has appointed, as neces-  
sary for people in general  
in order that they may be

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 23, 24, 52, 54.

<sup>2</sup> The Catechism waives (or passes by) the question whether there are other rites which can be called Sacra-  
ments besides these two. But it says that at any rate there are only two that were ordained by our Lord as necessary to salvation for people in general, and its definition of a Sacrament will fit these two only. Even in Confirmation, which in all other respects answers to the

to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

saved, only two, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

*Question.*

What meanest thou by this word *Sacrament*?

WHAT A SACRAMENT IS.

What do you mean by the word 'Sacrament'?

*Answer.*

I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace

I mean a material sign that we can see (feel and taste) of help given to our souls, which sign was appointed

definition, we cannot say that the sign was *ordained* by Christ personally. (See p. 3: but also St. Matt. xix., 13-15). 'Generally' is not quite the same as universally. The two Sacraments are necessary in cases where it is possible for people to have them. But we can be quite sure that God, who is perfectly fair and just, punishes no one for what is not his fault. Therefore if, for instance, as sometimes happens, a heathen who is converted happens to die before he is baptized, or a baptized person dies before he is of age to receive the Holy Communion, they cannot lose anything by the want of these. (See the rubric at the end of the Communion Service for the Sick, "But if a man," etc.) If however we decline to use the means which God's Son appointed, we cannot expect Him to help us; it is then our own fault, and we must take the consequences.

given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

by Christ himself as a means by which we receive the help to our souls, and as a pledge to assure us that we do receive it.

*Question.*

How many parts are there in a Sacrament?

How many parts are there in a Sacrament?

*Answer.*

Two; the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.

Two; the material sign which we can see, and the help given to our souls.

*Question.*

What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism?

WHAT BAPTISM IS.

What is the material sign, or means, which we can see, in the case of Baptism?

*Answer.*

Water; wherein

Water, in which the person

the person is baptized *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*<sup>1</sup>

is baptized, with the words “In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>1</sup>

*Question.*

What is the inward and spiritual grace?

What is the help given to our souls?

*Answer.*

A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

That a person is parted from his old sins, as thoroughly as if he were dead, and started on a fresh, good life: for being naturally born with tendencies to sin, which come out in our acts,<sup>2</sup> with which God must be angry, we are in Baptism made his favoured children.

<sup>1</sup> “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”—*St. Matthew, xxviii. 19.*

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 22, 176.

*Question.*

What is required of persons to be baptized?

What is required of persons who wish to be baptized?

*Answer.*

Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and Faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.

(1) Repentance, by which they give up their sins, and (2) Faith, by which they firmly believe in what God promises to give them by Baptism.

*Question.*

Why then are Infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?

Why then are babies christened, when they are too young to (1) repent, and (2) believe?

*Answer.*

Because they promise them both by their Sureties;

Because they promise both Repentance and Faith by means of their Godfathers

which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.

and Godmothers; which promise, when they are old enough to understand about it, they are themselves bound to carry out.<sup>1</sup>

*Question.*

Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?

WHAT THE LORD'S SUPPER IS.

Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper appointed?

*Answer.*

For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.<sup>2</sup>

For a constant memorial of the sacrifice which Christ made by his death, and of the benefits which we receive by that.<sup>2</sup>

*Question.*

What is the out-

What is the material part

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 25, 26, and note on p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> "This do in remembrance of me."—*1 Corinthians, xi.*

ward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?

*Answer.*

Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.<sup>1</sup>

Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.<sup>1</sup>

*Question.*

What is the inward part or thing signified?

What is the part that concerns our souls, signified or shown us by it?

*Answer.*

The Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.<sup>2</sup>

The Body and Blood of Christ, which are really and in fact taken and received in the Lord's Supper by those who have faith.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Take, eat; . . . Drink ye all of it."—*St. Matthew, xxvi. 26, 27.*

<sup>2</sup> "This is my body.

"This is my blood of the testament (or 'covenant') which is shed for many for the remission of sins."—*St. Matthew, xxvi. 28; Hebrews, ix. 11-26; Exodus, xxiv. 6-8.*

*Question.*

What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby ?

What are the benefits which we (with others) gain by means of this Sacrament ?

*Answer.*

The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the Bread and Wine.

That, just as our bodies are strengthened and refreshed by the Bread and Wine, so our souls are strengthened and refreshed by the Body and Blood of Christ.

*Question.*

What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper ?

What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper ?

*Answer.*

To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, stedfastly purpos-

(1) To think about their own lives, and look into their own minds, in order to see if they are really sorry for their former sins, and have

ing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men.

firmly resolved to think, speak, and do differently in future; (2) to have faith in God's mercy shown us through Christ, a faith which is really alive, and which is going to produce results, —with thankfulness when they remember what His death has gained for them, and what He went through to gain it; and (3) to be on kindly terms with everyone, as a Christian should be.<sup>1</sup>

### THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

The word 'Sacrament' is a most appropriate one. It means properly 'the military oath of allegiance'; and in Baptism the oath of allegiance is taken by us, or for us, when we are enlisted at first in Christ's army, an engagement which we definitely take on ourselves in Confirmation; but as none of us are nearly as faithful to this engagement as loyal soldiers ought to be, in the

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 145-150.

Lord's Supper a means is provided us not only of renewing our allegiance, but also of gaining strength to keep our engagement better.<sup>1</sup>

You will notice that the Catechism lays great stress on the fact that there are two parts in a Sacrament;—it repeats the question, so that there may be no mistake about this. It will be easy to see the difference between these two parts if we imagine a case like this. Suppose that a heathen came into a church where a child was being christened. He would see that water was poured on it, while certain words were said. This is the 'outward visible sign'; but it certainly is not all that takes place in Baptism. So if the Lord's Supper were being celebrated, he would see that, after certain prayers, bread and wine were eaten and drunk by the people. This again is the 'outward visible sign'; but it is not the whole of the Sacrament, if we are to believe St. Paul, not to mention the Catechism. The fact is that in a Sacrament there is an outward, visible, material part—which with our

<sup>1</sup> See, in the Communion Service, the Confession, the prayer beginning "We do not presume to come to this thy Table," and in the prayer after the Communion, "And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto thee."

bodies we can see and feel and taste and smell—and there is an invisible part, which concerns our souls only. The material part belongs to those things which we perceive around us with our senses. The inward part belongs to the world of which the kingdom of heaven, and angels, and our own souls form part—things which we cannot see, though we can often see their results or working. But these are certainly not less real than material things. In fact they are more real and permanent—“The things which are seen are for a time, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”<sup>1</sup>

The Sacraments then are not merely figures or parables intended to teach us—Baptism, to remind us that we must be clean if we are to be Christ’s servants, and the Lord’s Supper to remind us that Jesus Christ died for us (though they *do* do this as well)—but they are also means by which certain real benefits are actually conveyed to our souls, by our Lord’s appointment. And those who come to the Sacraments in the right way and the right spirit will get the ‘inward part’ as surely as the water touches them, or as they eat the bread and drink the wine, since Christ’s promise<sup>2</sup> is the very best security. The

<sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians, iv. 18.

<sup>2</sup> St. John, iii. 5, 6, and vi. 50, etc.

two parts of the Sacraments, the material part and the part that concerns our souls, go together (except by our own fault), though of course they are distinct—they belong to different worlds.<sup>1</sup>

But, as has been said before, God will not help us unless we do what we can and ought for ourselves. And so the questions are asked, “What is required of persons to be baptized?” “What is required of them who come to the Lord’s

<sup>1</sup> But both are there. One does not swallow up the other, so that (according to the Roman Catholic doctrine of ‘Transubstantiation’) there is no real bread and wine at all after the consecration. Yet St. Paul speaks of the Sacrament as ‘bread,’ *after* it is consecrated (1 Corinthians, x. 17). ‘Transubstantiation’ was not the old doctrine of the Christian Church; it was developed in the Middle Ages (not the wisest period in the history of mankind, to say the least), and, after much opposition, was finally approved by a Pope, and then by a Council which represented one part of the Christian world only. It rests on the idea prevalent in the Middle Ages that nothing can be real that is not material—in which case God and the soul must be material as well. But this theory about the Lord’s Supper was not pressed on people till the middle of the eleventh century. Even so late as 990 A.D. a sermon was put out in the English of the time, which keeps impressing on the people that the Sacrament is not Christ’s *natural* body, that His Body is given in a heavenly manner, in a mystery—that is, not according to the laws of the material world which we (partially) understand.

Supper?" Men can easily defeat God's kind purpose, and get no help from the Sacraments, if they choose.

### BAPTISM.

We have said something about Baptism already,<sup>1</sup> but there are some things in the account of it given in this part of the Catechism which need explaining.

We shall understand what is here said about it much better, if we think, in the first place, of the way in which it was usually administered in the earliest times, in warmer climates. It was 'by immersion,' that is to say, the person was plunged ('buried') under the water,<sup>2</sup> and this was a type of his putting off his old life as completely as if he were dead and buried, and rising from the water, as if from the grave, to live quite differently. So St. Paul says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we were

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 21, etc.

<sup>2</sup> This is allowed in the Church of England; in fact, it is by the 'rubrics' (the directions in italics) prescribed in ordinary cases, and it is sometimes (though rarely) used. Of course the *effect* of the Sacrament is the same in either case.

buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”<sup>1</sup> And this is why the Catechism says that the ‘inward part’ of Baptism is ‘a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness.’ This is meant in any case—a person who is brought into Christ’s Church must live a new and better life, as we have seen already; and Baptism starts him on the way to do so. And if the form now usual in the West does not teach us so vividly as the old one did, the effect of the Sacrament is the same—it is “the washing of regeneration (a new birth) and the renewing of the Holy Ghost,”<sup>2</sup> the being ‘born of water and of the Spirit.’<sup>3</sup>

There is one smaller point in the same answer which perhaps needs a little more explanation (though something has been said about it already),<sup>4</sup> namely the words ‘being by nature born in sin and the children of wrath.’<sup>5</sup> Well, we certainly are born with tendencies and impulses to go wrong, which even children carry out in thoughts, words, and acts. And God hates evil, just as people who are at all like Him do. But He has

<sup>1</sup> Romans, vi. 3, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Titus, iii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> St. John, iii. 5.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Ephesians, ii. 3.

provided us a way by which, if we choose and try our best, we can be cleansed from this evil. The remedy does not take effect all at once ; but God, so to speak, anticipates this, and makes us at our Baptism, 'children of grace,' that is 'His favoured children,' whom He helps constantly by His Spirit to make a good start and to get rid of evil more and more, *if we choose*. But, as has been said before, God's help depends upon our wanting it, and doing what we can in the same direction for ourselves.<sup>1</sup> Some dogs, after they have been washed, go and roll in something nasty. Some people who have been baptized do much the same. The person who washed them is not answerable for the result in either case.

We shall also understand what is said in the Catechism better, if we think, to begin with, of the case of a grown-up person, a heathen, wishing to be baptized. He has probably been living a very bad life—we do not generally realize how bad the lives of very many heathens are, because the details are 'unfit for publication.' Well, he wishes to be a Christian, and so asks to be baptized. Now, if he really wishes to be a Christian, he must be sorry for his wrong-doings

<sup>1</sup> See last part of the Exhortation nearly at the end of the Service for Baptism.

before, and want to live differently, as genuine Christians do. This is "Repentance, whereby they forsake sin." And of course he would not want to be baptized, unless he thought that God, by His Son who came down and lived in the world, had made Baptism a means for giving him an entirely new start, with help from the Holy Spirit to live differently in future. This is "Faith, by which they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament."

But in the early part of the Catechism there were *three* things undertaken for us—that we should renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, believe the Christian faith, and keep God's commandments—and here there are only two. The difference is only apparent. Faith in God's promises made to one in Baptism implies faith in Him, and in His Son who instituted that Sacrament, and in the Holy Spirit who baptizes or washes the soul. And Repentance includes the renouncing of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and the keeping of the commandments of God and our Lord. For, if we are sorry for and dislike a thing or things that we have been doing before, we naturally wish to act differently, and, as a start for this we must of course renounce what has led us wrong (the world, the flesh, and the devil), or we shall be led wrong again.

Now let us look at this as it applies to infant Baptism. There is a slight confusion about the way in which the Catechism states the answer to the question, "Why then are infants baptized, when, by reason of their tender age, they cannot perform *them*?"—'them' being Repentance and Faith—that is, 'when they cannot repent and believe.' For their promising through their God-parents to repent and believe is not the reason why they are baptized so young, but the way in which the difficulty can be got over. And the reason why they should be baptized as soon as possible is taken for granted, namely, that we cannot too soon be made 'members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven,' provided that the difficulty of our not being able, as babies, to make the necessary engagement can be got over—as it can.

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Dear be the Church, that, watching o'er the needs  
Of Infancy, provides a timely shower,  
Whose virtue changes to a Christian flower  
A growth from sinful Nature's bed of weeds.

WORDSWORTH.

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Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him ; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection ; for his merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The Lord's Supper is a perpetual remembrance of Christ's death, which is the only real sacrifice for sin that there has ever been ; and it is a memorial of it independently, so to speak, of the Bible. The celebration of the Lord's Supper was not begun by some one who found an account of it in the Gospels. If the books of the New Testament had never been written, what Christians there were would still celebrate the Lord's Supper. For it has been celebrated continuously since the Day of Pentecost,<sup>2</sup> and thus is a standing proof that our Lord instituted it before His death. But that is no reason why we should not look at what is

<sup>1</sup> Collect for Easter Eve.

<sup>2</sup> Acts, ii. 46 ; xx. 7.

said in the New Testament about it in order to clear and correct our ideas. Now, besides the account of its institution given in each of the first three Gospels<sup>1</sup> (St. John does not usually describe what every Christian knew when he wrote his Gospel, later than the rest), there is first of all the prophecy, or teaching about it given beforehand by our Lord, in the sixth chapter of St. John. Though no doubt this passage may partly apply to the union of Christians with Christ in other ways, it must, from the coincidence of the expressions used in it with what He said about the Lord's Supper when He instituted it, refer to this, and St. Paul's teaching about this Sacrament is exactly the same.<sup>2</sup> And our Lord's words about it in St. John are again and again adopted in the Communion Service.

The main part of what our Lord said on that occasion is printed here :

47     "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that be-  
48 lieveth hath everlasting life. I am the bread  
49 of life. Your fathers did eat the manna in the  
50 wilderness, and are dead ; this is the bread  
51 which cometh down from heaven, that a man may  
eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xxvi. 26, etc. ; St. Mark, xiv. 22, etc. ; St. Luke, xxii. 19, etc.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, 1 Corinthians, x. 16, 17.

which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of 52 the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us 53 his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his 54 blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last 55 day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my 56 blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in 57 him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even 58 he shall live by me. This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat and are dead: he that eateth this 59 bread shall live for ever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. 60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who 61 can hear it? But Jesus knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at it, said unto them, 62 Doth this offend you? What then if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was be- 63 fore? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh

profiteth nothing : the words that I have spoken unto you,<sup>1</sup> they are spirit, and they are life.”<sup>2</sup>

There is no need to explain this at length. It would probably only spoil it. In such matters, which belong to another world or sphere of which our knowledge is most imperfect, it is very dangerous to go beyond what we are told. But we may just say about verse 57, that if our union with Jesus Christ by partaking of His flesh and blood is like His union with the Father, as He says it is, it is certainly in no way material. From a material point of view the bread and wine are bread and wine and nothing else. This does not prevent the Sacrament from being really and actually (‘verily and indeed’) something very different to our souls.<sup>3</sup>

In the next place, there is the earliest written account of it that we have, in the eleventh

<sup>1</sup> ‘The words that I have spoken unto you,’ may just as well mean (from the use of the word *ρήμα*) ‘the things that I have spoken to you about.’ <sup>2</sup> St. John, vi. 47-63.

<sup>3</sup> It is possible that the words in the prayer before the Prayer of Consecration in the Communion Service, ‘That our sinful bodies may be made clean by his Body,’ may cause a difficulty to a few. But there is no reason why this should not be done through the soul, which affects the body in so many ways. As the Prayer after the Communion says, we have got to present our bodies too as a living sacrifice to do God’s will.

chapter of the first letter which St. Paul wrote to the Christians of Corinth, which is some few years older than any of the Gospels. You will see from it that they had been celebrating the Lord's Supper from the time that the first people had been made Christians through St. Paul's teaching at Corinth,<sup>1</sup> but they had gone seriously and scandalously wrong in the way that they celebrated it, and had to be put right.

17 "Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better,  
18 but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.  
19 For there must be also heresies<sup>2</sup> among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest  
20 among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not<sup>3</sup> to eat the Lord's  
21 supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and  
22 another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I

<sup>1</sup> Verse 23.

<sup>2</sup> Sects, parties, or factions; those who do not join them show that they are true Christians.

<sup>3</sup> Or rather, 'it is not possible.'

23 praise you not. For I have received of the Lord  
that which also I delivered unto you, That the  
Lord Jesus the same night in which he was  
24 betrayed took bread: and when he had given  
thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is  
my body, which is broken for you: this do in  
25 remembrance of me. After the same manner  
also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying,  
This cup is the new testament<sup>1</sup> in my blood: this  
do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of  
26 me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and  
drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till  
27 he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this  
bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily,  
shall be guilty of the body and blood of the  
28 Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so  
let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.  
29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily,  
eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not  
30 discerning<sup>2</sup> the Lord's body. For this cause  
many are weak and sickly among you, and

<sup>1</sup> Or 'covenant;' see p. 169, note.

<sup>2</sup> 'Discriminating,' that is, separating it from the rest of  
the meal, and thinking of it and treating it as something  
different from ordinary food. 'Unworthily' should really  
not be in this verse, but 'eateth and drinketh judgment to  
himself, if he discern not the body,' gives much the same  
sense

31 many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves,  
 32 we should not be judged. But when we are  
 judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we  
 should not be condemned with the world.  
 33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together  
 34 to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man  
 hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not  
 together unto condemnation. And the rest will  
 I set in order when I come.”<sup>1</sup>

This is printed exactly as it stands in the ordinary version of the Bible, because it is in this form that large parts of it have been taken into the ‘Exhortation at the time of the celebration of the Communion’ (the third and last of the Exhortations in the Communion Service). It is certainly very unfortunate that the word ‘damnation’ (verse 29) should have been used both in the Bible and the Prayer-book; it has no doubt kept many from the Lord’s Supper who should have gone to it, because they thought the risk too great. In the first place, when the Bible was translated and the Prayer-book put together the word did not necessarily carry the sense which it now does.<sup>2</sup> It meant ‘condemnation,’ and the same Greek word is so translated in verse 34. But the word which St. Paul used in both these places really

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians, xi. 17-34.

<sup>2</sup> See Romans, xiv. 23.

means 'judgment,' and so the verb<sup>1</sup> is translated in verses 31, 32 ('we should not be judged,' 'but when we are judged'), where he says that the judgment or punishment of the profane people among the Corinthians was to warn and stop them so that they might *not* be condemned at last. However we shall understand the whole meaning better if we look at the circumstances which St. Paul is speaking of.

Among the earliest Christians it was the custom for them all to meet once a week, on 'the Lord's Day,' to have a meal together, in order to mark their friendship, and to encourage it. The food was meant to be supplied by each person bringing something (as at a picnic), and sharing it with the rest. But many of the Corinthians, instead of letting the poor have their share, kept all their food to themselves or their own family or friends, so that the poor went hungry, while others ate and drank too much. And then they celebrated the Lord's Supper! It would not be easy to beat this for profanity.

And now we can see what 'unworthily' (verse 27) means. It means 'in a way unworthy of the Lord's Supper,' and not 'when he is unworthy.' If people are to wait to 'eat the flesh of

<sup>1</sup> *κρι-μα, κρι-νω*, see Revised Version.

Christ and drink His blood ' till they are worthy to do so, there will be no need to have the Communion celebrated at all, for no one is really worthy of it ; as is said in the Service, " We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy." To wait until we are very good would be like waiting to take medicine till one is quite well. The Lord's Supper was given us as medicine for our souls, to make us more worthy, and anyone who knows that he is unworthy, and wants to become less so, is just the person for whom this Sacrament was instituted.

And now let us look at the Lord's Supper generally, from what we hear about it in the Bible, and the Communion Service (which you ought to read), and in the Catechism.

(I.) " If with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy Sacrament . . . we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood ; we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us ; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us."

We have said already that one who follows Christ has got to try to be like Him. How can we better get help to do this than by receiving Him into our souls ?

We are ' members of Christ.' In what way can

we make this union more real than if from time to time we are 'verily and indeed' united afresh to our Head, or the Vine of which we are the branches?<sup>1</sup>

It is also to be remembered that this connects us with all other Christians, as St. Paul says,— "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion ('sharing,' 'partaking') of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of the one bread."<sup>2</sup> This is surely a very close connection with our fellow-Christians, and is a further reason for our doing our very best for them, who are connected with us by such a tie as that.

(2.) The Lord's Supper is a remembrance of the sacrifice of our Lord on the cross. It reminds us of it (for fear that we should forget it, as we often do), and it is also a commemoration of it before God. Our Lord's death is not merely spoken of, as when we say in the Litany 'by thy Cross and Passion, good Lord, deliver us,' but it is represented (acted, if one may say so), when the bread is broken and the wine poured out. And we claim a share in that 'one oblation of himself

<sup>1</sup> St. John, vi. 57; xv. 4-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Or*, "For, as the loaf is one, so we, the many, are one body," etc. 1 Corinthians, x. 16, 17.

once offered' when we 'eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood.' For when the Jews and heathens offered sacrifices, they took part in them (and the benefits to be derived from them) mainly by eating part of the flesh of the victim.<sup>1</sup> This is the reason why so much is said in the Acts and in St. Paul's Epistles<sup>2</sup> about 'things offered to idols,' because the Christians, living among heathens, were so likely to be entertained with meat from victims offered by their hosts, and eating this (if they knew what they were doing) was taking part in the sacrifice. Therefore, when we claim our share in our Lord's 'one oblation of himself once offered,'<sup>3</sup> the one "full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice . . . for the sins of the whole world", we may confidently ask God for what has been gained for us by it—'remission of our sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion'—for ourselves, for all our re-

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, the account of the Passover (Exodus, xii. 3-11); the sacrifice at which Saul first met Samuel (1 Samuel, ix. 13 and 24); and what St. Paul says, "Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat the sacrifices partakers of the altar?" (1 Corinthians, x. 18); and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, xiii. 10: "We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."

<sup>2</sup> Acts, xv. 29; 1 Corinthians, viii. 4-13; x. 14-29.

<sup>3</sup> See Hebrews, ix. 24-28.

lations and friends, and in fact for all Christians, not forgetting those who are dead, who certainly do not belong any the less to Christ's Church.<sup>1</sup> And, since He died to make us better boys or men and to save us at last, we may ask with confidence for help against temptation, particularly any that touches or threatens us at the time, and for all that will make us and our friends better—more like Christians, that is to say, less unlike Christ—and that our health and circumstances may be suited to this end. And with this we join our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for all God's goodness to us, particularly for sending His only-begotten Son to die for us, and we offer ourselves for Christ's service to make things round us better, which is the least return that each of us can make, since

"Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all."<sup>2</sup>

And now 'what is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper?' First of all, one ought to examine oneself—one's thoughts, words, and acts—in order that we may be properly sorry for having done so little that our Lord (who did and bore so much for us) wishes us to do, and for

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 23, 24; 55, 56.

<sup>2</sup> See the prayer after the Communion, 'O Lord and heavenly Father,' etc., for all that has been said above.

having done so much that He hates, and that we may make up our minds to alter what we have found to be wrong, and try to please Him better in future. And so we ought to 'take stock' of ourselves and our life honestly, and also carefully and intelligently. It is not enough to feel that in general we are not as good as we ought to be. This is quite true, but if a person wants to improve in anything—if a boy, for instance, is keen about cricket and yet is not successful with it—he tries to find out exactly what he does wrong. And to please our Lord, who, as we remind ourselves in the Holy Communion, did and suffered so much 'for us men and for our salvation,' is worth taking still more pains about.

Secondly, one ought to have real faith in Jesus Christ, 'who humbled himself even to the death upon the Cross for us, miserable sinners, . . . that he might make us the sons of God and exalt us to everlasting life,' remembering (as we said before<sup>1</sup>) that God the Father sent the only-begotten Son into the world, and that without the help of the Holy Spirit we could neither feel gratitude nor show it. And this faith must be alive. The usual test of anything being alive is

<sup>1</sup> See p. 72.

to see whether it moves, and does things. And, as we saw before,<sup>1</sup> a faith in our Saviour which makes no difference to our lives is a dead sham.

Thirdly, to remember His death with thankfulness is of the very essence of Holy Communion. One can hardly imagine anyone taking part in it without this, and one of the earliest names for this Sacrament (and one which is still often used) is the 'Eucharist,' or Thanksgiving.

Fourthly, we must be 'in charity,' or on terms of kindness, with all men. We have spoken about this before in explaining the Lord's Prayer.<sup>2</sup> But there is special reason for it in connection with the Holy Communion. First of all, because our Lord in His death, which we are commemorating, set us the great and almost incredible example of it by dying for His murderers. Secondly, because we are by it made one with all Christians — with all the other 'members of Christ'; and children of the same Father ought not to hate each other. Thirdly, because we know how much our Lord, who died for us, cares about it. For just after He had instituted the Lord's Supper He said to the Apostles, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 63, 64.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 145-150.

one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one towards another."<sup>1</sup> He says it again and again to impress it on them, as something that He cared about very much, and it would be a strange kind of loyalty to Him to keep one of His dying commands while taking no notice of the other.

And lastly, there are one or two practical questions about which a little may be said, though no hard and fast rules can be laid down. First, is it a good thing to use any book of devotions in church or chapel while one is waiting to communicate, or after one has communicated? If one cannot keep one's thoughts fixed without it, no doubt it is, but some people would find it a great hindrance to have their minds kept in the same or similar grooves every time they communicate. People ought to use a book, or not use a book, according as they think that it helps them or not. Secondly, how often ought one to communicate? This, again, is a matter that each one must decide for himself. For some it is better to communicate oftener, for some, not so often. In the case of some, very frequent communicating would tend to make them think little of it, as being a matter of

<sup>1</sup> St. John. xiii. 34, 35.

course, and one ought not to do it without proper preparation, which however need not be long and wearisome;<sup>1</sup> but one should of course think beforehand of what one is going to do;—the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood deserves that at least. But the fact is that every time notice is given of the Communion it is a repetition to us of our Lord's command, "This do in remembrance of me." We may have a reason for not accepting the invitation that time; but it ought to be one that we think He would approve of. There are some very bad reasons,—that we do not want to give up some bad habit, or to do our duty as Christians, 'whose light ought to shine before men,' in other words, because we are 'ashamed of Christ crucified,' or it may be that we dislike giving up a quarrel with someone, and yet think (quite rightly) that we are bound to 'purpose to lead a new life' and 'be in charity with all men,' if we receive the Sacrament.

Whether one finds it best to receive it often or not so often, if anyone gives up communicating

<sup>1</sup> There is a book, for instance, called "Invitation and Simple Preparation," by 'Fidelis,' which is on the whole very sensible and good. But the last answer in the Catechism, and the last of the three Exhortations in the Communion Service give one sufficient lines to go on.

more or less regularly, at whatever intervals he finds best, and so neglects the aid which Jesus Christ offers him to help him to do right and keep straight, he has no one but himself to blame if he goes wrong seriously. We cannot possibly keep the promise we make for ourselves in Confirmation (which we are bound as gentlemen to do) and be loyal soldiers to our Lord, if we keep apart from Him. For, as He tells us Himself, "Without me ye can do nothing."<sup>1</sup>

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Bread of heaven, on Thee we feed  
For Thy flesh is meat indeed ;  
Ever may our souls be fed  
With this true and living bread,  
Day by day with strength supplied  
Through the life of Him who died.

Vine of heaven, Thy blood supplies  
This blest cup of sacrifice ;  
Lord, Thy wounds our healing give,  
To Thy cross we look and live ;  
Jesu, may we ever be  
Grafted, rooted, built in Thee.

JOSIAH CONDER.

<sup>1</sup> St. John, xv. 5.

Him first to love great right and reason is,  
Who first to us our life and being gave,  
And after, when we fared had amisse,  
Us wretches from the second death did save ;  
And last, the food of life, which now we have,  
Even he himself, in his deare sacrament,  
To feed our hungry soules, unto us lent.

EDMUND SPENSER

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We do not presume to come to thy Table,  
O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in thy manifold and great mercies  
We are not worthy so much as to gather  
up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou  
art the same Lord, whose property is always  
to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious  
Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus  
Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful  
bodies may be made clean by his body, and our  
souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he  
in us. *Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

[See too pp. 75-78.]

<sup>1</sup> From the Communion Service.



## APPENDIX



# I

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

*with some of the authorities for its statements  
from the Bible*

I BELIEVE in God the Father (St. John iii. 16;  
xx. 17.)

Almighty, (St. Luke i. 37.)

Maker of heaven and earth: (Acts iv. 24;  
Hebrews i. 2.)

And in Jesus (St. Matthew i. 21; St. John  
xix. 19.)

Christ (St. Matthew xvi. 15-17; St. Mark xiv.  
61, 62; Acts iv. 26; x. 38.)

his only Son (St. Mark xii. 6; St. John iii.  
16; 1 John iv. 9; St. Matthew xi. 27.)

our Lord, (St. John xx. 28, 29; 1 Corinthians  
xii. 3; Philippians ii. 9-11.)

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, (St.  
Matthew i. 20; St. Luke i. 35.)

Born of the Virgin Mary, (St. Matthew i. 18, 24, 25; St. Luke ii. 5-7; St. John i. 14; Galatians iv. 4.)

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, (St. Mark xv. 15; Acts iv. 27; St. Luke iii. 1.)

Was crucified, (St. Matthew xxvii. 35; Galatians vi. 14.)

dead, (St. Mark xv. 44, 45; St. Luke xxiii. 46; St. John xix. 30-35; Acts v. 28; Hebrews ii. 9.)

and buried, (St. Matthew xxvii. 57-66; St. Mark xv. 42-47; St. Luke xxiii. 50-55; St. John xix. 38-42.)

He descended into hell; (St. Luke xxiii. 43; Acts ii. 25-31; 1 Peter iii. 18-20.)

The third day He rose again from the dead, (1 Corinthians xv. 1-11; Galatians i. 1; Ephesians i. 19, 20; St. Matthew xxviii.; St. Mark xiv. 28; xvi. 1-8;<sup>1</sup> St. Luke xxiv.; St. John ii. 19-21; St. Matthew xxvi. 61; St. John xx. xxi.; Acts i. 1-9; ii. 32; x. 40-42; Hebrews xiii. 20.)

<sup>1</sup> St. Mark's Gospel, whether through his death or otherwise (perhaps because in the original copy the end of the roll got torn) is not complete—it ends in the air, so to speak. Two endings to it were written at an early date, one of which is translated in the 'Authorised Version.'

He ascended into heaven, (St. Luke xxiv. 50-52; Acts i. 9; St. John xx. 17; Ephesians iv. 8-10.)

And sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; (St. Matthew xxviii. 18; St. Luke xxii. 66-69; Ephesians i. 20, 21; Hebrews i. 3, 4.)

From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. (St. Mark xiv. 62; St. Matthew xxv. 31-46; Acts i. 11; x. 42.)

I believe in the Holy Ghost; (St. Mark i. 10; St. John xiv. 16, 17, 26; Acts ii.; iv. 31; Ephesians i. 13, 14; Romans viii. 14.)

The Holy Catholic Church; (St. Matthew xviii. 17, 18; St. John i. 12, 13; Ephesians iv. 4-6, 11-16; St. Matthew xxviii. 19, 20; St. John iii. 5, 6; 1 Corinthians x. 17; St. Matthew v. 13-16; Romans i. 7; St. Matthew viii. 11; Acts i. 8; x. 44-48; Ephesians ii. 8-22; Colossians iii. 11-15; St. Mark x. 13, 14.)

The Communion of Saints; (Hebrews xii. 22-24; Revelation vii. 9-17.)

The Forgiveness of sins; (Isaiah liii. 4-6, 10-12; 1 Peter ii. 24; Colossians i. 12-14; Titus ii. 14.)

The Resurrection of the body, (St. Matthew xxii. 29-32; St. John xi. 23-26; I Corinthians xv. 12-58.)

And the Life everlasting. (I Thessalonians iv. 17.) *Amen.*

## II

### DIFFICULTIES IN BELIEF

*If you have not got any, there is no need to read this. But it might be useful to you later on, so it may be worth while to keep the book.*

#### *General Advice.*

IF anyone finds any point in religion a difficulty, hard to understand or hard to believe, by far the best plan is to talk about it (or write, if you cannot do that) to some one whom you think likely to have got more experience and more knowledge than yourself. (No one who is able to help another in this way is at all likely to 'think it a bore,' or mind 'being bothered.') People's minds are differently constituted, and what is a difficulty to one is not a difficulty to another, so that no book can cover all the ground. And

there are some difficulties which have caused much trouble, yet which only want looking at in the right way, to vanish altogether. For instance, the supposed miracle of the sun standing still (Joshua x. 12-15) is contained in (or rests upon) a quotation from a book of ballads, 'The Book of Jasher,' or 'the Upright,'—apparently a 'Lyra Heroica,' or collection of songs about national heroes (see 2 Samuel i. 18). It is poetry. Now we do not suppose that young children drag bright clouds after them because Wordsworth says in the 'Ode on Intimations of Immortality' that "trailing clouds of glory do we come." Nor do we believe that the Channel water is actually silver because Shakespeare says that England is "set in the silver sea."<sup>1</sup> Of course God could have done this miracle if He had wished, but it seems unlikely that He should have done so, and thus it has been a difficulty, and is so still to many working men. But when we know that it is a poetical expression, and probably only means that the black clouds of the hailstorm cleared away when Joshua prayed, and gave the Israelites 'a long day' for pursuit, the difficulty is gone (see Geikie, 'Hours with the Bible,' vol. ii., c. xiii.,

<sup>1</sup> Richard II., Act II., Sc. 1, l. 46.

pp. 416, 417). There are many things in the Bible like this, which are only difficulties through want of knowledge. And if we have not got the knowledge ourselves, we ought to try to get it from those who are likely to have it. There is no sin in having difficulties, but it is wrong not to take the obvious means of finding out the truth.

### *Miracles.*

It is sometimes said that miracles are incredible as being 'contrary to experience.' This must mean one of two things:—either 'contrary to ordinary experience,' or 'contrary to universal experience.' That a miracle is contrary to ordinary experience is a truism. Of course it is, or it would not be called a miracle or wonder—yet many exceptional or extraordinary facts have been found to be true (see pp. 59, 60, 61). To say that it is contrary to universal experience 'begs the question'—assumes what has to be proved—for a well-attested miracle (such as our Lord's resurrection) is itself a part of experience.

It is also sometimes said that Christianity would be easier to believe if no miracles were attached to its history. There is thus much truth in this statement, that at the present time people

in general, and scientific men in particular, are so occupied in studying the uniformities which are to be discovered in nature (which we call 'laws,' see p. 154), that their minds naturally run in that groove—they are inclined to disbelieve what they cannot reduce to rule. But the fact that people's minds run in a groove does not ensure their opinions being correct; ways of thought common in some previous ages have often led people into mistakes; and we have to take care that we are not misled by those common in our own time. We ought to believe what we have evidence of, whether it squares with our habits of thought or not.

But really, if we believe the main fact of Christianity, that Christ "came down from heaven, and from a Hebrew Virgin took and clad himself with flesh,"<sup>1</sup> it is more natural than not that with His divine power He should have done things beyond the power of man to do. The wonder would be if He had not done so. Besides this, the evidence for the greatest miracle in the Gospels, the Resurrection, is very complete; while disbelief in it leaves a number of facts connected with the rise of Christianity unexplained and apparently inexplicable. And if

<sup>1</sup> *Apology* (=defence of Christianity) of Aristides, between 125 and 140 A.D. See Romans, i. 3, 4.

we believe it, our Lord's other miracles are easier to believe than not. One who could rise out of the grave after He was Himself dead could surely raise others to life, and do the other 'mighty works' to help those in trouble, the 'signs' of what He was. Besides, very many of His miracles have connected with them, or are connected with, things that He said on the occasion—in fact, many of them seem to have been remembered only as the 'text' of what He said. Now, "never man spake like this man," and, if the miracle could have been invented or imagined, even the Apostles could not have invented what He said—it is far too characteristic of Him. But the two are inseparable. (See, for instance, St. Matt. viii. 5-13; St. Luke v. 18-26; xvii. 11-19.)

And if God did miracles Himself when He was on earth, there is no difficulty in believing that He should have given the like power to men at special times and for adequate purposes, particularly to the Apostles to help them in the difficult and most necessary work of planting His Church in the world. St. Paul was certainly convinced that He had this power, and it is not easy to see how he could have been mistaken. (See, for instance, Romans xv. 18, 19, where "I will not dare to speak," etc. = "I will dare to

speak only of those things which Christ hath wrought," etc. ; and see 2 Corinthians xii. 12.

There is an interesting quotation in the ecclesiastical historian Eusebius from an 'Apology' (or defence of Christianity) by one Quadratus, addressed to Hadrian, who reigned A.D. 117-138, —a book now lost. Eusebius says : "The work is still extant in the hands of very many of the brethren and also in mine, and it is easy to see from it plain proofs both of the author's mind, and of his apostolic correctness of faith. And the same man shows by the way his own antiquity by recording what follows in characteristic words. 'And the works of our Saviour were always with us. For they were true ; those who were healed, those who rose from the dead, who were seen not only while they were being healed and being raised, but always present with us ; and not only while the Saviour sojourned on earth, but also when He had departed they were there for a considerable time, so that some of them reached even to our own times.' Such a man then was Quadratus."

Eusebius then mentions the 'Apology of Aristides,' a work which was re-discovered in 1889 ('Ecclesiastical History,' IV. iii.).

*The Evidence for Christianity.*

In general we may say that the evidence for Christianity is of three kinds, though only a mere outline of each can be given.

(1) The evidence for the genuineness, and early date, and accuracy of the Gospels, and Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles, so that we can be sure that the people who recorded the facts knew what they told us.

(2) The proof which Christianity carries with it, in itself, and from its results in the world and on the character of individuals, showing that it comes from God, and has God at its back, so to speak.

(3) The certainty of its truth that a Christian can have from his own experience.

(1) The evidence for the principal documents of Christianity has been enormously strengthened of late years, though it was before sufficient for a large number of learned and intelligent men (both clergymen and laymen) who were quite ready to face the facts honestly. For one thing, the knowledge of how to judge of manuscripts, so as to discover the true original text, is far better understood; it has become such a science that we can be sure that if, for instance, the original copy of one of the Gospels

were to be discovered, it would not be different in important particulars from what is now judged to have been the correct version of that Gospel.<sup>1</sup> This differs in some respects, but not at all seriously, from the 'Authorised Version.' And the date of these documents is far too early for the facts recorded to have been much altered or developed—a process which we can sometimes see going on in mediæval lives of saints. St. Paul's account of the Resurrection (1 Corinthians xv. 1-8), written some few years earlier than any in the Gospels, fits these in the same sort of way that two or more accounts of a group of *facts*, given by different people, may be expected to do. And here one may remark that people who disbelieve Christianity are sometimes very unfair in their treatment of its documents. They do not give them the same reasonable treatment that they would use in the case of other historical evidence (see Professor Ramsay's "Was Christ born at Bethlehem?" p. 9, etc.). For instance, St. Matthew says that, as our Lord went up to the Passover for the last time, He gave sight to *two* blind men just as He left Jericho. St. Mark and St. Luke say that there was *one* blind man; but as to the place where

<sup>1</sup> See what is said in Westcott and Hort's "New Testament in Greek."

the miracle was done, St. Mark agrees with St. Matthew, while St. Luke says that it was just before He came to Jericho (St. Matthew xx. 29-34; St. Mark x. 46-52; St. Luke xviii. 35-43). Some people think that one of the two men was the more prominent, or spoke for both. Very likely this will account for part of the difference in the accounts; but, whether this is so or not, is it not exactly the sort of variation that one gets in the accounts given by different persons of something that they have seen? They agree in the important points, and their memory differs about the details, which really do not matter in the least. We can test this from our own experience. If facts in ordinary history were to be treated as doubtful because we had two or more different accounts of them, we should be left with few certain facts at all. It is much the same with the accounts of the Resurrection, though here there is really little difficulty in fitting them together into a consistent narrative.

Great attacks have been made on St. John's Gospel, partly no doubt because it is inconvenient to those who are not inclined to believe the literal truth of the Gospel—if it is by St. John, he must have seen and heard almost everything about which he tells us—and it puts

forward our Lord's Deity more explicitly than the others, though this is evident enough in the first three Gospels (for instance, St. Matthew xii. 8 ; xvi. 27 ; St. Mark xiv. 61-64 ; St. Luke i. 76<sup>1</sup>).

A few years ago Bishop Lightfoot brought forward evidence from St. John's Gospel itself,<sup>2</sup> which can, one would think, leave no doubt to one who reads it that this Gospel was written by a Jew, a contemporary, an eye-witness, and by St. John. One point may be referred to which is mentioned by Lightfoot, though it is 'external' evidence. Those who attacked the Gospel had said that it was written in the middle of the second century A.D., or later. Now there was a work called "Diatessaron," that is, a 'Harmony

<sup>1</sup> The 'child' in the last quotation is of course John the Baptist.

As to the reasons why St. John's Gospel runs in some ways on different lines from the others, for instance, in the style of our Lord's discourses, any good commentary will explain this, but there is a part of St. Matthew (also in St. Luke) which looks just as if it were a bit cut out of St. John's Gospel. (St. Matthew, xi. 27 ; St. Luke, x. 22.)

<sup>2</sup> "Internal Evidence for the Authenticity and Genuineness of St. John's Gospel" in "The Expositor," January to March, 1890. Republished in "The Fourth Gospel. Evidences external and internal of its Johannine authorship," by Ezra Abbot and others, 1892.

of Four Gospels,' written about 170, only parts of which were known to be extant. The critics who disbelieved in St. John's Gospel were able therefore to assert (as they did) that this Gospel (which according to them was then being written, or had only recently been written) was not one of these four. But then the whole of the work was discovered, and it was found that they were quite mistaken, for the Diates-saron begins with the opening words of St. John's Gospel.

Special attacks have also been made on the genuineness of the Acts of the Apostles. This too is an inconvenient book, for it contains sober accounts of missionary work, such as might occur in the report of a missionary society, or in a newspaper, and yet miracles are interspersed (some of them actually seen by this apparently careful historian; *Acts xx. 6-12; xxviii. 3-6*): and it opens with the account of how our Lord taught His disciples after His resurrection, which a vision could not have done. And the evidence about it from outside, though sufficient, is (as it happens) not so strong as for some books of the New Testament. Accordingly theories were invented as to how, and how late it was written. Unfortunately for these suppositions, the evidence which the book has

within itself is quite inconsistent with them. What the author knows about the arrangements in the Roman Empire is wonderfully accurate—his knowledge is such as could only have been got by going to the places where the history takes him or his informant St. Paul, for there were then no such Encyclopædias or Dictionaries of Geography to consult as we have now. For instance, you can see at the British Museum an inscription from Thessalonica which shows that its magistrates were called 'politarchs,' as St. Luke calls them in the Acts (see Acts xvii. 8, in the Greek Testament), though it is a very unusual title, apparently almost confined to Macedonia. This is only a specimen, but such points and descriptions in the Acts tally so closely with what we know otherwise that a very learned and able man, who, following the hostile critics, had thought it a forgery, was, after going honestly and carefully into the facts, obliged to change his opinion. This is what he says:—

"My aim is only to investigate the traces of minute fidelity which stamp this part of Acts as, in part or in whole, a trustworthy historical authority, dating from 60-70 A.D."

And again, "The books of the New Testament are treated here simply as authorities for history; and their credit is estimated on the same prin-

ciples as that of other historical documents. . . . For years, with much interest and zeal, but with little knowledge, I followed the critics and accepted their results. In recent years, as I came to understand Roman history better, I have realized that, in the case of almost all the books of the New Testament, it is as gross an outrage on criticism to hold them for second-century forgeries as it would be to class the works of Horace and Virgil as forgeries of the time of Nero."<sup>1</sup> And in his later book, "Was Christ born at Bethlehem?" the same author expresses the conviction that the 'two books of Luke' are true histories of what they profess to relate.

Besides, the account given in the Acts fits the facts as to the spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire, of which we know in other ways, and which has got to be accounted for.

Then some very early Christian writings<sup>2</sup> have been discovered lately (in addition to those which we had before), all of which show us the Christian religion practically the same as we now have it,

<sup>1</sup> "The Church in the Roman Empire before A.D. 170," by Professor Ramsay. Preface.

<sup>2</sup> The full text of the Epistle of Clement, Bishop of Rome, about 95 A.D. ; "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," of the end of the first century ; and the "Apology of Aristides," between 125 and 140 A.D.

—being founded on the same historical facts, and the same teaching from our Lord.

Only some few such points can be even touched on here, but the upshot is that the question will bear looking into, from the Christian point of view. What Bishop Lightfoot says of St. John's Gospel is true of the New Testament in general, that 'it is not from too much light, but from too little light that its historical credibility has suffered.'

We must remember too that Christianity has many props in the way of documents to rest on—it has plenty of margin. If all the books or parts of them which can be doubted on any reasonable grounds were given up, our religion would still have plenty to rest upon, and its character would be unaltered.

(2.) Secondly, there is the evidence from what Christianity is, and from its results. Now as to this our view is apt to suffer a little from the persistent tendency of some Englishmen to run down what belongs to themselves, even their own religion, just as they run down their own country and its institutions. For instance, we sometimes have Mahometanism and Mahometans held up for our admiration. Now it is possible to regard Mahometanism as a very heretical and corrupted form of Christianity. But in any

case we have lately had a lesson as to what a reign of tyranny, cruelty, and filthiness can result from it, and that too while the religious revival (under the Mahdi) was still fresh. And people often read Christian ideas (which come from our Lord's teaching) into other creeds where they do not really belong. Still, these ideas have now been in the world so long that they have been adopted by many who do not believe in Christ's religion, and who are perhaps unconscious of their origin.<sup>1</sup> Christianity has been 'in the air' for a long time now, and its results are not shown only in professing Christians.

But, looking at Christianity in itself—as we find it in the Gospels, for instance—where, if our religion is not true, does the character of our Lord come from?<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to see how anyone can doubt that it is the perfect character and example, and few people dispute this. Did the Apostles invent or idealize it? The most

<sup>1</sup> Of course one must not try to limit the work of the Holy Spirit, who has made good men under all kinds of creeds.

<sup>2</sup> What a Gospel would be like derived from people's imagination, and what sort of character they thought Christ *ought* to have, is shown in what are called the 'Spurious' or 'Apocryphal' Gospels, some of which are as early as the middle of the second century.

prominent of them were rather ignorant fishermen, none of them were really learned, and they have taken pains to show us candidly to their own discredit, by their own written statements,<sup>1</sup> or through others whom they told, that they were very slow at understanding His character, work, and teaching. Did St. Paul invent or idealize it? Although there are constant coincidences between St. Paul's writings and the Gospels, certainly neither is derived from the other, though both rest on the same foundation,—the facts of our Lord's life and His teaching. Here then is some one with a character of supreme excellence and wisdom, and yet who claims not only to do miracles by God's power (St. Matthew xii. 28; St. John xi. 41-43), but to be the Son of God (St. Mark xiv. 61-64; St. Luke xxii. 69-71), and to be God (St. Matthew xi. 27; St. John, viii. 58; x. 30; xiv. 9, etc.).

Now He must have known whether this was so or not. With His character, He could neither have imagined it nor said it if He had not known it to be true. And His life and character are explained in this way, and are unintelligible on any other theory.

And Christ left a Church—a society to carry

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, St. John, xii. 16.

on His work—and said that He would be with it to the end of the world.<sup>1</sup> This Church was to spread quietly everywhere,<sup>2</sup> and from very small beginnings was to become a mighty power, and to extend to the furthest parts of the earth.<sup>3</sup> Has it done so, or not? Those who belonged to it were (so far as they were genuine adherents) to be 'the salt of the earth,' and 'the light of the world.'<sup>4</sup>

We are often inclined to flatter ourselves that our moral improvement comes from 'civilization'; but what except Christ's Church gave a start to this civilization, when that of the Roman world had been wrecked by the barbarians? Education, and learning, and freedom, and works of kindness to the poor and sick were all nursed up by Christ's Church, in spite of the mistakes and sometimes the crimes of those who represented it. But if civilization had developed otherwise, it would by itself (so far as we can judge) have been a very doubtful benefit. Both the Greeks and the Romans had an elaborate civilization, and yet one would say that they were on the whole better men when they were half barbarians—the Greeks in Homer's time, the

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, xxviii. 20.      <sup>2</sup> St. Matthew, xiii. 33.

<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew, xiii. 31, 32; Acts i. 8.

<sup>4</sup> St. Matthew, v. 13, 14.

Romans under the early Republic—than they were when they were fully civilized.

And yet the Church has not been altogether what it was intended to be. For instance, it is only now beginning to learn tolerance in matters not essential, just as if our Lord had never given it its lesson (St. Luke ix. 49, 50), and 'the enemy' has been very active in 'sowing tares among the wheat' (St. Matthew xiii. 24-30) as Christ said he would. If we want to see what the world would have been like if all who profess to be Christians had behaved accordingly, we must look at the lives of pattern Christians (real Christianity has been essentially the same in all ages), at men like St. John, and St. Paul, and King Alfred, and St. Francis of Assisi, and General Gordon, and many others in and out of the Calendar. Perhaps we can add some from our own knowledge. What would the world be like if all Christians had tried to follow Christ like them? "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (St. John i. 12).

And then again and again when this Church has seemed, in some part of the world, to be dying, as often through the work of some man, or body of men, it has renewed its life,—through

the work of the Friars in the thirteenth century, through the Reformation (which had its effect at the time on Roman Catholics as well), through the preaching of Wesley in England, followed first by what is called the 'Evangelical revival,' and then by the High Church revival, and the activity of all parts of the Church of England (not to speak of other Christians) in our own day—all in the main on the old Christian lines, and showing this character especially in what was one of the principal marks of the kingdom of heaven at its foundation, that 'to the poor the gospel is preached' (St. Luke vii. 22). If this Church is a human institution, due to natural causes, there has been nothing like it since the creation of the world.

(3) Thirdly, there is a man's own personal experience,—that he is helped by prayer or by the Holy Communion to overcome temptation and to improve, that he is guided by the Holy Spirit in difficulties, or that God is making things work out for his good, as he can sometimes see by looking back as his life goes on. And this direct knowledge is to oneself no doubt the best evidence of all. It is only the practice of Christianity which can give us fully the power to understand what it means and how splendid it is, fulfilling our Lord's words 'If anyone

wishes to do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself' (St. John vii. 17).

And these different kinds of evidence support each other. They all point in the same direction. The Church is certainly founded on a rock.

Lastly, one may say that people sometimes make or increase their difficulties for themselves by being impatient,—by wanting to know and understand everything at once. A man can still believe the Apostles' Creed even if he has not quite settled what is the date of certain books of the Old Testament, or in what precise sense the account of the Fall is a true one;<sup>1</sup> the one thing is not involved in the other. One may be puzzled at times what exact view to take of the Holy Communion, but at the very least we can do what Christ tells us 'in remembrance of Him.' And so with all minor difficulties. The thing to do is to hold on to the great facts of our faith of which we are convinced, and let everything that is not of the essence of it fall into its place as we are able to make up our minds about it.

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<sup>1</sup> See Canon Gore, "The Epistle to the Romans, vol. ii., note E, especially § v., pp. 231, 232.

Among the books useful to read on the evidence for Christianity, besides those mentioned, are

Popular Objections to Christianity.	}	by Bishop Winnington Ingram.
New Testament Difficulties.		
Old Testament Difficulties.		
The Gospels, their Age and Authorship.	}	by Dr. Kennedy.
The Resurrection of Jesus Christ.		
Oxford House Papers.		
The Creed of the Christian.		by Bishop Gore.

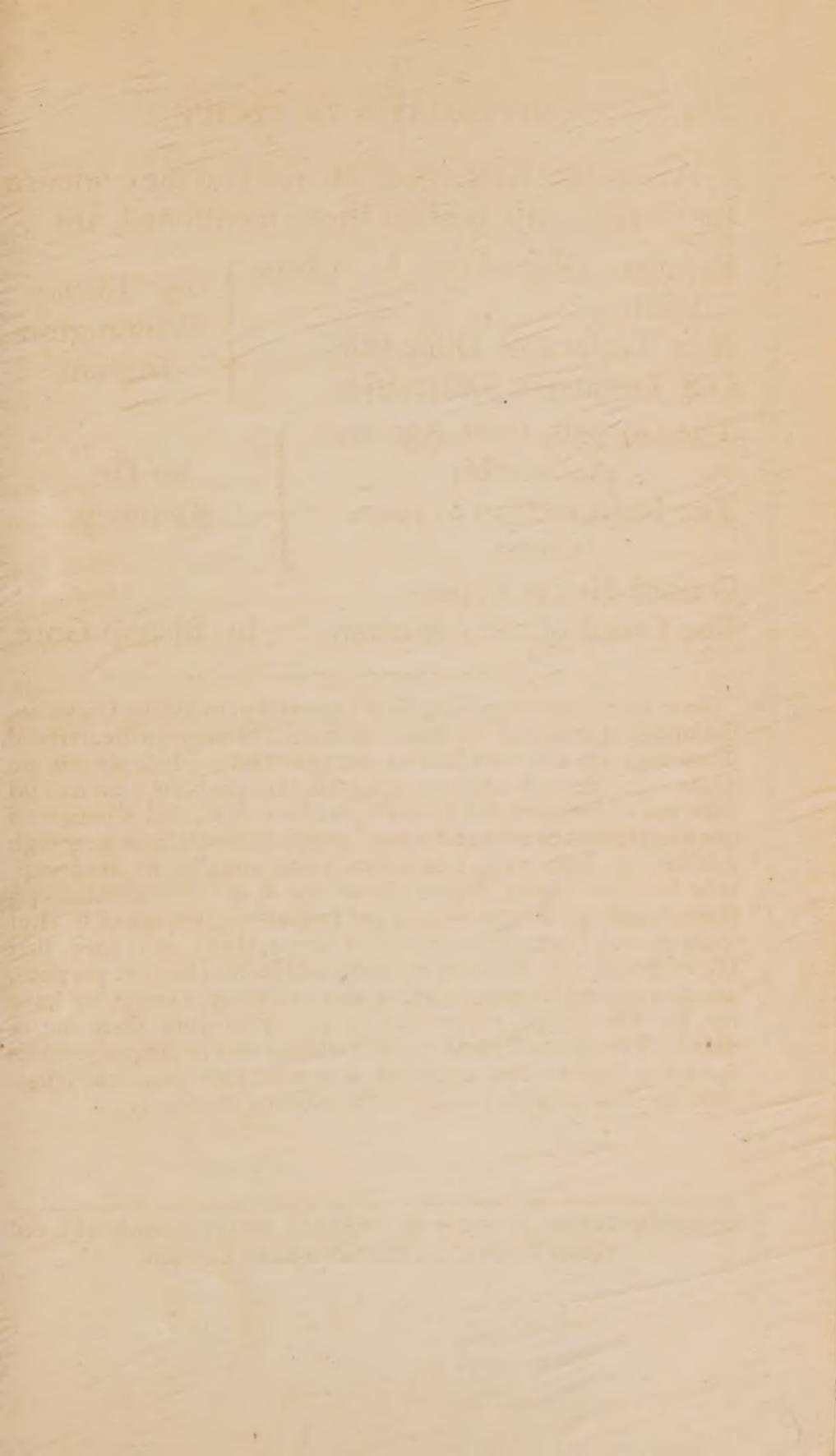
As to difficulties regarding God's general plan for the Universe, the origin of evil, and the final destination of men, particularly of those who are not very bad or are greatly tempted, we are no doubt incapable of understanding all this properly. So a child does not understand his father's plans for him, and a person of low moral ideas cannot understand a man who acts from very high motives. In both ways, intellectually and morally, we are incapable in a far higher degree (Isaiah iv. 8, 9,) of understanding God's working, though we can get imperfect glimpses of it. But these practical principles, that God is just, that God is love, that He wishes all men to be saved, and sent His Son for that purpose, are quite enough for us to know and to live by, even if we have not the knowledge, experience, or ability to work them out in detail. The limitations of our knowledge and of language make it easy to believe that apparent contradictions may really harmonize—like parallel straight lines meeting at infinity.

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